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THE WORLD'S GREAT CHESS GAMES

Edited by

Reuben Fine

Revised and Expanded Edition

Dover Publications, Inc.
New York

To the memory of Dr. Emanuel Lasker,
philosopher, mathematician, chess
master extraordinary.

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1.

The Game of Kings

Chess was first played in India about the seventh or eighth century. For more than a thousand years it remained the pleasure of the elite, the "game of kings." The names and powers of the pieces and the setup of the board were originally symbols of fierce wars.

Little is known of the early development of chess; there are only scattered references here and there. We do know that it was always a game which aroused violent passions. One story has it that in India players sometimes became so fanatically absorbed that they gave up wives, businesses, everything else, just to play. Some records of the Middle Ages tell us of the clerics' being chided by their superiors for forgetting the ways of God and losing themselves over the checkered board. Such addiction to chess is familiar to everybody who has ever come close to the game. Usually, in my experience, people become violently attached to chess for a few years and then give it up. But with many, chess is like a delicious drug which offers such heavenly delights that they can never tear themselves away from it completely.

Some time during the Middle Ages chess was brought to Europe, where for several centuries it remained an obscure pastime for a few. Perhaps it was the alteration of the rules which led to the beginning of greater popularization, for around the sixteenth century we find the changes taking place that led to the present rules. Yet even today there are many people who play according to a brand of special rules which they have picked up somewhere or other. As a matter of fact, when I learned how to play, I was taught the old Italian rule for castling: all the pieces except the King and the Rook have to be cleared off the last rank before the King can exchange squares with the Rook. Several amusing incidents come to mind of how many people play the game in a manner most decidedly not according to Hoyle. When I was in college, a professor asked me to play a few games with him. I drew the white pieces and opened with an advance of the Queen's Pawn. He protested violently, claiming that the only permissible opening move was the advance of the King's Pawn! Some years ago, I was playing in a tournament in Hollywood. A number of the movie stars came to watch the play, and once one invited me to a few games. After seven moves I found myself in check and interposed a pawn. This was illegal, he claimed; the only legal way to meet a check was to move the King. I convinced him that interposition was permissible and proceeded to win the game. His alibi was that I won because I used my rules—if we'd used his rules he would have won!

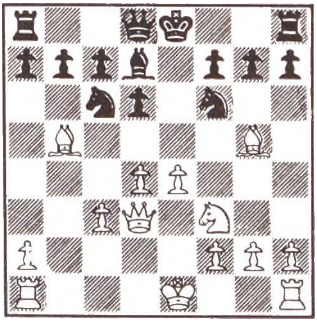
Modern chess was really born in the sixteenth century. The first great player of whom we have any note is Ruy Lopez. Not only was he the strongest of his time, but he also laid down a pattern which many later masters were to follow: he wrote a book. The treatise is hardly worth much by modern standards. A sample can show how much chess has advanced since then. Here he analyzes the opening named after him:

1 P–K4 P–K4
2 N–KB3 N–QB3
3 B–N5 B–B4

This is now known as the classical defense, no doubt revolutionary in its day.

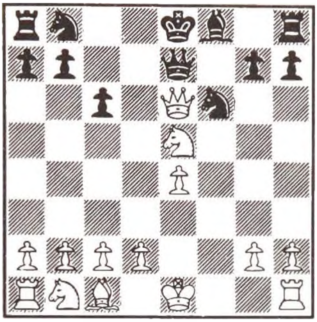
4 P–B3 P–Q3
5 P–Q4 PxP
6 PxP B–N5ch
7 N–B3 B–Q2
8 B–N5 N–B3
9 Q–Q3 BxNch?
10 PxB "with the better game."

Position after 10 PxB—"with the better game."



Ruy Lopez must have been aware of some of the major principles of development, but his combinative skill was hardly brilliant. Here is the most impressive example that I have been able to find:

BLACK: *Leonardo da Cutrie* (MADRID, 1575)



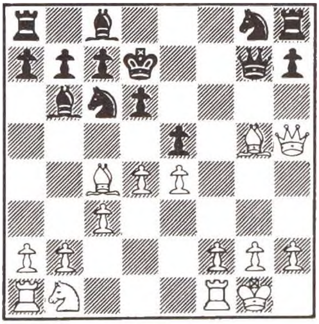
WHITE: *Ruy Lopez*

1 Q–B8ch Q–Q1
2 QxQch KxQ
3 N–B7ch and wins.

In the sixteenth century long division was so complicated that it was taught in the universities; today it comes in the fourth grade. The advance of chess has been almost as great.

Chess mastery has a way of settling in one or two countries. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries its greatest exponents were found in Spain and Italy. After Lopez, the most eminent figure in the chess world was the Italian, Giacchino Greco, who lived in the seventeenth century. His play already represents some improvement over Lopez, although it is hopelessly backwoodsish by modern standards. Here is a specimen combination from the collection which he began in 1619:

BLACK: *Unknown*



WHITE: *Greco*

1 B–K6ch!! KxB
2 Q–K8ch KN–K2
3 P–Q5 mate

Philidor

In the eighteenth century chess supremacy began to leave Spain and Italy and emerge in France and England. The outstanding master of this period was the Frenchman François André Danican Philidor, who was universally regarded as the strongest player and greatest theoretician of his time, though the title of world champion was not yet in existence. He towers head and shoulders over his predecessors. He swept all opposition before him in his travels on the Continent and in England. Besides being a great player, he was the first to write a worthwhile book on the game. His *Analyse des Echecs*, first published in 1749, has gone through more editions and been more widely circulated than any other chess book. It is still often encountered in second-hand bookstores all over the world. Chess players are a hard lot to please—they won't buy a book unless they get something out of it! The success of Philidor's work shows that he had captured some of the basic principles of chess and been able to put them down in readable form. His analysis of the ending with Rook and Bishop against Rook, known as Philidor's Position, is still considered sound. Here, at last, was a man whose technical skill could for the first time be compared to some degree with that of the moderns, although he was still quite inferior by our standards.

Philidor also began the custom of blindfold exhibitions, in which a single player without sight of the board or pieces takes on a number of opponents. He could play three boards, which is of course trivial compared to the present world's record of forty-five. But three was considered such a stupendous achievement in his day that he had witnesses attest to it and took an advertisement in the paper to record for posterity that it had actually been done. Two hundred years later Najdorf was greeted with the same incredulity in his forty-five board exhibition. Perhaps two hundred years from now, when the average master will routinely be playing a hundred boards blindfold, people will look at Najdorf's achievement with the same amused condescension that we look at Philidor's.

Besides his chess prowess, Philidor was also a musician of considerable note. He composed a number of operas, some of which are still performed. His bust adorns the Paris Opera. Rousseau's *Confessions* mentions Philidor many times with reference to music and chess.

Philidor was famous for his ability to handle the pawns. He is reputed to have said that the "Pawn is the soul of the game." Here is a sample of his play:

CAPT. SMITH PHILIDOR

King's Bishop's Opening

London, 1790

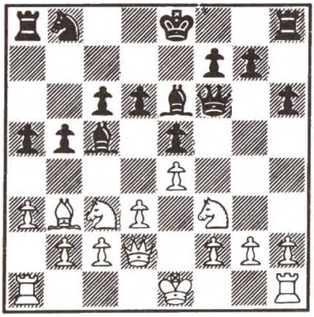
1 P-K4 P-K4
2 B-B4 N-KB3
3 P-Q3 P-B3

To occupy the center.

4 B-KN5?

White has little feeling for positional chess. Anything else is better!

4 . . . P-KR3
5 BxN QxB
6 N-QB3 P-QN4
7 B-N3 P-QR4
8 P-QR3 B-B4
9 N-B3 P-Q3
10 Q-Q2 B-K3



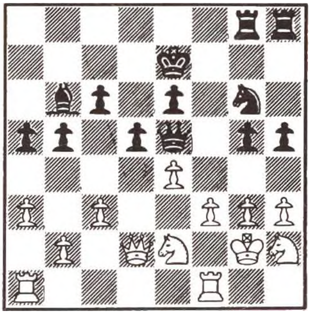
11 BxB PxB!

An excellent idea. This opens the KB-file for the attack. Philidor's mastery of positional concepts is striking, though he neglects the safety of his King too much.

12 O-O P-N4
13 P-R3 N-Q2
14 N-KR2 P-R4
15 P-KN3

White's play is impossibly bad throughout. He is playing move on move with no clear idea of the consequences.

15 . . . K-K2
16 K-N2 P-Q4
17 P-B3 N-B1
18 N-K2 N-N3
19 P-B3 QR-KN1
20 P-Q4? B-N3
21 QPxP QxP



22 N-Q4?

Better was PxP first.

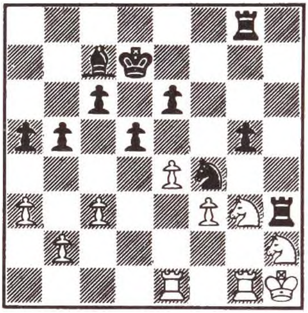
22 . . . K-Q2
23 QR-K1 P-KR5
24 Q-KB2 B-B2?

RPxP immediately was more precise.

25 N-K2

Missing the obvious KPxP.

25 . . . RPxP
26 QxP QxQch
27 NxQ N–B5ch
28 K–R1 RxP
29 R–KN1



29 . . . RxNch!
30 KxR R–R1ch
31 N–R5 RxNch
32 K–N3 N–R6ch
33 K–N4 R–R5 mate

Not great chess as yet, but a long stride forward in the development of general principles.

Philidor | no clocks
Deschapelles
Labourdonnais

2.

From Philidor to Morphy

AFTER Philidor chess supremacy remained in the hands of the French for a long time. ~~Philidor~~ was succeeded by Deschapelles, who was also a noted whist player. And Deschapelles was followed by his pupil Labourdonnais. In those days chess matches were leisurely, almost informal affairs. There were no clocks to harry the contestants—each player could take as much time as he wanted.

Labourdonnais' greatest achievement was his marathon contest against the English champion Alexander MacDonnell, which the Frenchman won by a ratio of three games to two. From this match dates the first immortal game of chess history.

LABOURDONNAIS
MACDONNELL
50th Match Game
London, 1834
Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 **P–Q4** **P–Q4**
2 **P–QB4** **PxP**
3 **P–K4**

A move which is today considered inferior. The principles of center play were but half understood at that time.

3 . . . **P–K4!**
4 **P–Q5** **P–KB4**
5 **N–QB3** **N–KB3**
6 **BxP** **B–B4**

Black's position is freer.

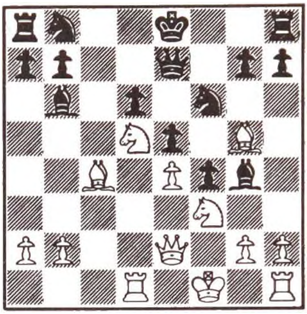
7 **N–B3** **Q–K2**
8 **B–KN5?** **BxPch!**
9 **K–B1**

For if 9 KxB Q–B4ch.

9 . . . **B–N3**
10 **Q–K2** **P–B5**
11 **R–Q1**

Preparing to lose.

11 . . . **B–N5**
12 **P–Q6** **PxP**
13 **N–Q5**



13 . . . NxN!!

The move White had overlooked.

14 BxQ N–K6ch
15 K–K1 KxB

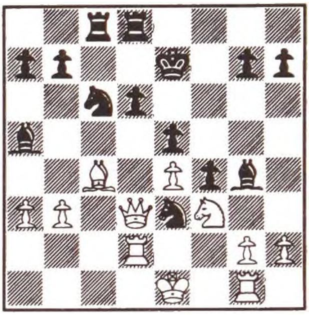
Black has two pieces and a powerful attack for the Queen. Subsequent analysis has never been able to demonstrate a really adequate defense.

16 Q–Q3 R–Q1
17 R–Q2 N–B3
18 P–QN3

P–QR3 was better, but *18* . . . QR–B1 still retains the bind.

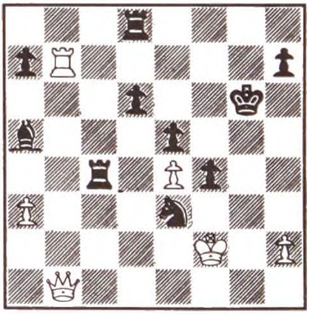
18 . . . B–QR4
19 P–QR3 QR–B1
20 R–N1

White unsuccessfully struggles to free himself.



20 . . . P–QN4
21 BxP BxN
22 PxB N–Q5
23 B–B4 NxPch
24 K–B2 NxR(Q7)
25 RxPch K–B3
26 R–B7ch K–N3
27 R–N7 N(Q7)xB
28 PxN RxP
29 Q–N1

It is curious how the Knight keeps the White Queen immobile.



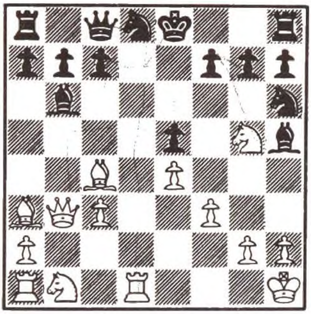
29 . . . B–N3
30 K–B3 R–B6
31 Q–R2 N–B5 dis ch
32 K–N4 R–KN1
33 RxB PxR

34	K–R4	K–B3
35	Q–K2	R–N3
36	Q–R5	N–K6
	Resigns	

There is no defense against . . . N–N7ch followed by R–R6 mate.

MacDonnell was in turn on the receiving end of a brilliant combination against Captain Evans, inventor of the Gambit which dominated tournament chess for almost a century. Here is the position:

London, about 1820



	EVANS	MACDONNELL
1	RxNch!!	QxR
2	NxBP!!	Q–R5

The prettiest part of the combination is, as so often, untold. If 2 . . . NxN 3 B–N5ch! P–B3 4 Q–K6ch Q–K2 5 QxQ mate, and if 2 . . . BxN 3 BxBch NxB 4 Q–K6ch and mate next. But 2 . . . Q–B3 was much better than the text.

3	Q–N5ch	P–B3
4	QxKPch	K–Q2
5	Q–K6ch	K–B2
6	B–Q6 mate	

In France the leading player after Labourdonnais was the colorful Pierre Charles Fourné de St. Amant. St. Amant had a variety of talents apart from chess. For a while he worked as secretary to the governor of French Guiana—a position which he lost because he protested against the slave trade. Later he tried his hand at the stage, and then he became a successful wine merchant. In the revolution of 1848 he was a captain in the National Guard and saved the Tuileries. In 1851 he was French consul in California.

St. Amant held sway until the Englishman Howard Staunton dethroned him in a series of memorable matches in 1843. As with so many other losers, he at least had the satisfaction of winning the most brilliant game.

ST. AMANT STAUNTON

13th Match Game
Paris, 1843
Queen's Gambit Declined

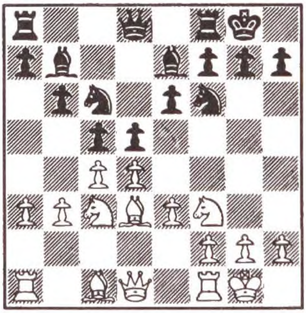
1 P–Q4 P–K3
2 P–QB4 P–Q4
3 P–K3 N–KB3
4 N–QB3 P–B4
5 N–B3 N–B3

Still a standard opening today.

6 P–QR3

Not a very good move, but the intricacies of modern positional play were then *terra incognita*.

6 . . . B–K2
7 B–Q3 O–O
8 O–O P–QN3
9 P–QN3 B–N2



10 BPxP KPxP
11 B–N2 PxP
12 PxP B–Q3

Both sides have lost time needlessly.

13 R–K1 P–KR3
14 R–QB1 R–B1
15 R–B2 R–B2
16 QR–K2 Q–B1
17 P–R3 N–Q1
18 Q–Q2 P–R3

Neither player has any definite plan in mind; both are jockeying for an opening.

19 P–QN4 N–K3
20 B–B5 N–K5

Better was . . . B–B5.

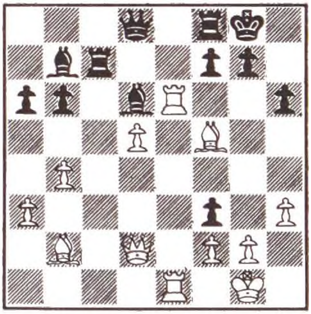
21 NxN PxN
22 P–Q5!

A move which was hailed by the French as a "Labourdonnais' Attack."

22 . . . PxN?

The decisive error. B–B5 was essential.

23 RxN Q–Q1



24 B–B6!!

The splendid point.

24 . . . PxB
25 RxB!

Here it is reported that the spectators broke out into enthusiastic applause. If 25 . . . QxR 26 QxRP and mates.

25 . . .	K–N2
26 RxQ	RxR

Nowadays one would resign here.

27 B–K4	PxP
28 Q–B4	R–B5
29 Q–N4ch	K–B1
30 Q–R5	K–K2
31 P–Q6ch	KxP
32 BxB	K–B2
33 BxRP	Resigns

Howard Staunton

Howard Staunton was one of the most vital personalities in chess history. He burst upon the game at a relatively late age—about thirty. Born in 1810, his first interest was in the theater, and, after a brief interlude as an actor, he became an eminent Shakespearean scholar, one of the leading authorities of his day. His annotations on Shakespeare's writings are still highly prized today.

It was not until 1840 that he came upon the chess scene. He defeated Popert, then the strongest player at the London club, and thereby immediately acquired considerable standing as a master. Because of his literary bent he began a magazine called the *British Miscellany and Chess Player's Chronicle*, which ran for a number of years. It soon became evident that he was by far the strongest player in England, and he now devoted the major part of his time to the game. By temperament he was an extremely aggressive, vigorous man who loved nothing better than a good argument in print. In the course of his life, he engaged in countless violent attacks on his contemporaries. A good example is this passage from his journal:

"A Barrister, Temple.—Calls our attention to the ridiculous alterations of the Laws of Chess, by G. Walker, in his *New Treatise on Chess*, and asks, 'Is it possible that such absurdities are sanctioned by the London Chess Club?' The only sanction given to Walker's puerilities by the committee is to laugh at them. His books on chess are no authority except among the lowest class of players."

Beside endearing him to his enemies, these diatribes paradoxically enough earned him the admiration of a large part of the chess community who were not personally involved. And there was no question but that Staunton was doing great work for chess. He wrote, he played, he traveled all over, lecturing and giving simultaneous exhibitions. He was obviously a man of tremendous egotism. This is true of so many great chess masters that one is prone to wonder whether this quality is not inherent in the personal equipment needed for the game. His egotism found an outlet in his passions for the game, and he had a way of carrying people along with him.

It is of some psychological interest that despite the great violence he displayed in personal quarrels, his style was remarkably placid at the chess board. This contrast between the personality and the chess style is again not unusual among masters. All too often we see milquetoasts like Spielmann who pour their aggressions onto the chessboard and choleric geniuses like Staunton whose passions almost vanish when they come to play.

Because of his style, Staunton's play is not very impressive to our eyes. Morphy described him as the author of a *Handbook* and some "devilish bad games." The best game of his that I have been able to find is from his match with St. Amant.

ST. AMANT **STAUNTON**

5th Match Game
Paris, 1843
Sicilian Defense

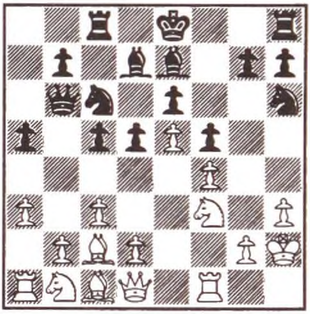
1	P–K4	P–QB4
2	P–KB4 (19[illegible] – [illegible]	

Now obsolete, but then routine.

2	. . .	P–K3
3	N–KB3	N–QB3
4	P–B3	P–Q4
5	P–K5	Q–N3

Labourdonnais used to play . . . P–B3. I would prefer 5 . . . P–Q5.

6	B–Q3	B–Q2
7	B–B2	R–B1
8	O–O	N–R3
9	P–KR3	B–K2
10	K–R2	P–B4
11	P–R3	P–QR4



The typical close game of that period.

12 P–QR4

If the subtleties of some of these moves escape the reader, he need not be too surprised; they escape me too.

12	. . .	N–B2
13	P–Q4	P–R3
14	R–K1	

To prevent . . . P–N4.

14	. . .	P–N3
15	N–R3	PxP
16	NxP	NxN
17	PxN	P–N4
18	N–N5	

St. Amant has no clear-cut plan.

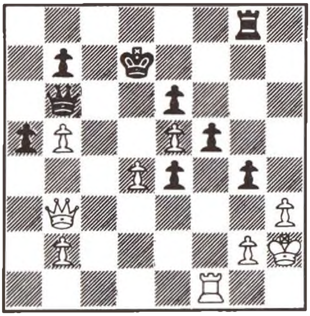
18 . . . BxN
19 PxB R–B5?
20 B–Q3! R–QB1

For if 20 . . . RxP 21 B–K3. Staunton's maneuver was a loss of time.

21 B–K2 PxP
22 R–B1

Better was BxP.

22 . . . N–N4
23 BxP N–K5
24 R–B1 RxR
25 QxR K–Q2
26 Q–K3 B–N4
27 B–Q3 R–KN1
28 BxN QPxB
29 BxB PxB
30 Q–QN3 P–N5



31 R–Q1?

Overly cautious. With RxP! he should have been able to draw anyhow.

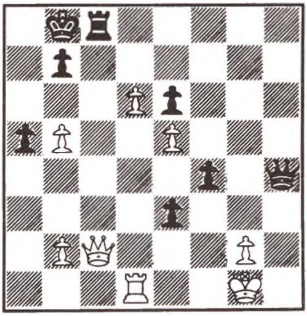
31 . . . PxP
32 QxP Q–Q1

Here Staunton comments: "The latter portion of this game is conducted with remarkable caution and skill by both parties." Staunton, like many another master after him, was in the habit of praising his opponent when he won, thereby proving how good Staunton was. From time immemorial chessmasters have excelled at two things: chess and alibis.

33 P–Q5 K–B1

Not 33 . . . R–R1 34 PxPch.

34 Q–B3ch K–N1
35 P–Q6 P–B5
36 Q–B5 P–K6
37 Q–B2 Q–R5ch
38 K–N1 R–QB1



39 Q–K2

Losing immediately, but there was no good defense.

39 . . . R–R1
Resigns

It is recorded that this game lasted 9½ hours; today it would take between 4 and 5. The introduction of the chess clock has speeded up the game and made for better chess.

LONDON 1851—CHESS TOURNAMENTS BEGIN

Chess had reached such universal popularity by the middle of the nineteenth century that the idea of a tournament to determine the relative strengths of masters in different countries came into being. It was the British, spurred on by both Staunton's prowess and aggressiveness, who took the initiative. In the year 1851 London had a "Great Exhibition of Art and Industry," and this also seemed a propitious occasion to hold a chess tournament. Invitations were extended to the leading players in the world, but, for one reason or another, many were forced to decline. Still, it was a very strong contest. There was Kieseritzky from Paris, Szen and Loewenthal from Hungary, Anderssen and Mayet from Germany, Staunton, Bird, and a number of others from England—sixteen players in all.

The tournament was run by the knockout system which prevails today in tennis. This system allows too many accidental results in chess, and it has since been abandoned in favor of the round-robin method, where each player contests one game (sometimes two or more) with every other. In the third round Anderssen met and defeated Staunton by a score of 4–1. Anderssen was now the unofficial champion of the world; the title was not yet in existence.

Adolf Anderssen

Pure combinative chess reached its climax in Adolf Anderssen. He represents the spirit of sacrifice, free and unrestrained.

Anderssen's life bridges the chasm from the isolated, localized chess activity of the early nineteenth century to modern international tournament play. When he began, there were no tournaments, no clocks, virtually no chess magazines, not even clearly established rules; when he died, master chess, though still relatively young, had already begun its march forward to the place it occupies in modern society.

From the age of nine, when his father taught him the moves, chess was Anderssen's major interest. Breslau, where he was born in 1818, was one of the most flourishing centers in Germany, the most vital chess stimulant of the last century. The local worthies were no great masters, but they were tough competition. And visiting celebrities—Bledow, von der Lasa, Mayet, Loewenthal, among others—were frequent.

Anderssen was given every chance to develop his genius. For a while chess was so important that school was neglected, but that stage did not last long. Perhaps because his parents were poor, his only personal ambition, apart from chess, was to find a secure berth as a teacher, and biographical details are accordingly meager: tutor in a private family in Pomerania from 1847 to 1851, instructor in German and mathematics at a gymnasium in Breslau for the remainder of his life. He never married, though we are told that he could "give a gallant turn" to conversations with women. With the personal problem solved, all his energy could be applied to chess.

There is a curious contrast between his over-the-board brilliance and uninspired safety first attitude in everyday affairs. For a few brief months, in 1851, he toyed with the idea of chess as a profession, but there was too much uncertainty involved. His letters from tournaments consist almost entirely of chess chatter and a detailed enumeration of the "scandalous" prices in restaurants and hotels. We are reminded of Spielmann, whose main concern, apart from chess, was to accumulate enough money to buy limitless quantities of beer. The real lives of dazzlingly brilliant chess geniuses are sometimes hopelessly dull.

Curiously, Anderssen first became prominent as a problem composer. In 1842 a collection of his problems was published, although he was scarcely known as a player at that time. Those were the days before international tournaments, and reputations were not easy to establish. Anderssen rose to fame by challenging and beating everybody and anybody he could lay his hands on. By 1846, when chess magazines were first issued in Germany, he was a contributing editor to the *Deutsche Schachzeitung* and one of the leading masters in the country; by 1851 he was recognized as the best.

Up to that time Germany had not yet produced any really great master. Since the days of Philidor, French and English players had dominated the chess world. The match between Staunton and St. Amant in 1844 was generally looked upon as one for the top honors, and Anderssen, in company with everybody else, thought of Staunton as the greatest alive.

Then came London 1851, the beginning of modern chess. The chief absentee was St. Amant, who refused to abandon the California gold rush for mere chess. The conditions do not look very palatable today. Everybody had to pay his own expenses. There was an entrance fee of five pounds. Players were classified by an unexplained method.

Despite all the handicaps and a certain feeling of insecurity, Anderssen won first prize in splendid style. It was a sensational victory, and Anderssen was universally acclaimed as the world's leading master. Though the title was not in use, he undoubtedly was the first world champion in modern times.

From 1851 to his death in 1878, Anderssen played chess whenever and wherever he could get a chance. There were few tournaments (none at all from 1851 to 1857) but countless offhand games, formal and informal matches. Though he lost to his two great rivals, Morphy (in 1858) and Steinitz (in 1866), to the end of his days Anderssen remained one of the two or three best in the world. After 1851, first prizes at London 1862 and Baden-Baden 1870 (almost unique for a man of fifty-two) were the climaxes of his career.

Anderssen's untiring zeal and love for the game certainly did much to give Germany the pre-eminent chess role it had until 1914. Recognition came early and was most gratifying. In 1865, Breslau University awarded him an honorary doctorate—the only time in history the academic world has ever granted chess more than a perfunctory nod. – see [illegible] on chess science

There is a natural tendency to compare Anderssen with the two men who outdistanced him, Morphy and Steinitz. Morphy beat him mercilessly for a very simple reason: Morphy understood the importance of the center, whereas Anderssen did not. Anderssen developed haphazardly, seized at the earliest moment any attacking opportunity that was offered, and often succeeded brilliantly. But such tactics could not work against a solid position managed by a real master.

The difference between Morphy's attacks and Anderssen's is quite obvious: with Morphy the attack flowed out of the position, with Anderssen it was always an inspiration of the moment, not organically connected to what preceded it.

Anderssen himself did not fully appreciate why he had lost! After the match he wrote: "He who plays with Morphy must abandon all hope of catching him in a trap, no matter how cunningly laid, but must assume that it is so clear to Morphy that there can be no question of a false step." This opinion, which does not give any credit at all to Morphy's revolutionary treatment of the center in the opening, epitomizes Anderssen's style: sacrifice, attack, with reason if possible, but if not, sacrifice, attack.

In a comparison with Steinitz, Anderssen comes off somewhat better, chiefly because Steinitz had not yet reached full stature. Steinitz won by outcombining his renowned opponent; the positional ideas which are the foundation of present-day chess came somewhat later.

Anderssen's true greatness appears when we examine his predecessors and early contemporaries. By and large, chess even at its best in Labourdonnais, MacDonnell, St. Amant, and Staunton was, despite the frequency of gambits, boring, long-winded and full of blunders. Opening play was stodgy and shot through with incredible distortions; there were even some who seriously argued that odds of pawn and move are an advantage because they allow Black to develop very quickly and attack along the open KB-file. Into this arid waste Anderssen came with the force of a mountain torrent. His chess was fresh, lively, full of ideas, happy inspirations, novelties, and surprises. Sacrifices, in season and out, were the main vehicle of his genius; few have ever demonstrated greater ingenuity in their conception and execution.

In a very real sense, Anderssen was the first modern master; certainly, with his decisive flair for combinations he did much to pave the way for modern chess.

His two most famous games have gone down in chess history as the "Evergreen" and the "Immortal." Here is the Immortal Game:

ANDERSSEN KIESERITZKY

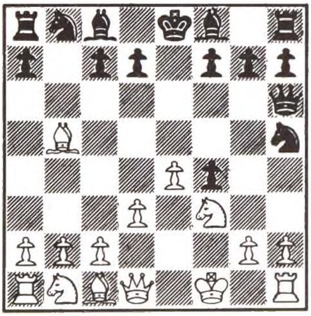
London, 1851

King's Gambit

1 P–K4 P–K4
2 P–KB4 PxP
3 B–B4 Q–R5ch

Nowadays . . . P–Q4 followed by quick development is preferred.

4 K–B1 P–QN4
5 BxP N–KB3
6 N–KB3 Q–R3
7 P–Q3 N–R4



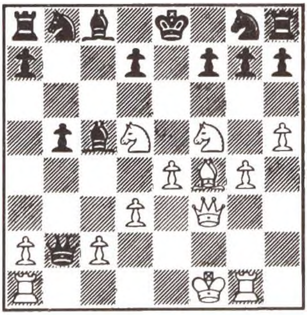
8 N–R4

Anderssen's feel for the attack comes to the fore. Other moves mean much less.

8 . . . Q–N4
9 N–B5 P–QB3
10 P–KN4! N–B3
11 R–N1! PxB
12 P–KR4 Q–N3
13 P–R5 Q–N4
14 Q–B3

Threatening BxP. The way in which the Black Queen has been bottled up is most ingenious.

14 . . . N–N1
15 BxP Q–B3
16 N–B3 B–B4
17 N–Q5 QxP



18 B–Q6!! BxR

The sacrifices are beautiful. If 18 . . . QxRch; 19 K–K2 QxR; 20 NxPch K–Q1; 21 B–B7 mate!

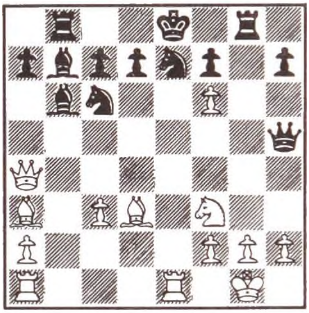
19 P–K5!!!

This magnificent quiet move is the key to the combination.

19 . . .	QxRch
20 K–K2	N–QR3
21 NxPch	K–Q1
22 Q–B6ch!!	NxQ
23 B–K7 mate	

Here is the conclusion of the Evergreen game:

BLACK: *Dufresne*



WHITE: *Anderssen*

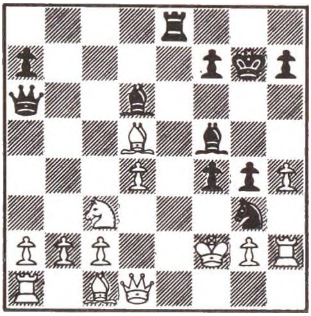
1 QR–Q1	QxN
2 RxNch	NxR
3 QxPch!!	

The point.

3 . . .	KxQ
4 B–KB5ch	K–K1
5 B–Q7ch	K–B1 (or Q1)
6 BxN mate	

Anderssen's games are so chock full of brilliancies that a whole volume could be devoted to them. Here are a few which are a perennial source of delight:

Anderssen—TO PLAY

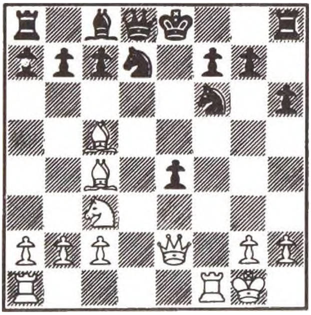


Rosanes

(Breslau, 1863—offhand)

1	. . .	B–K4!
2	P–R4	Q–B8ch!!
3	QxQ	BxPch
4	B–K3	RxB
5	K–N1	R–K8 mate

Schallop

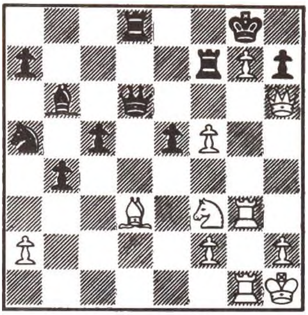


Anderssen—TO PLAY

(Berlin, 1864)

1	QxPch	NxQ
2	BxP mate	

Zukertort



Anderssen—TO PLAY

(Berlin, 1869)

1	QxPch!	KxQ
2	P–B6ch	K–N1
3	B–R7ch!	KxB
4	R–R3ch	K–N1
5	R–R8 mate	

3.

The Age of Morphy

After Anderssen's victory at London in 1851 he was universally acclaimed as the world's leading player. Staunton tried to challenge him, but the negotiations failed, thereby setting another precedent for the future. Time and again the two greatest masters of an era have not been able to get together for a match, on one pretext or another. This was true of Morphy and Staunton, Steinitz and Tarrasch, Lasker and Pillsbury, Alekhine and Capablanca, and it is still true today of Fischer and other Westerners and their Soviet rivals. Defeat in an important chess match is such a blow to a master's ego that it is no surprise to see so many of them finding excuses for avoiding a contest.

Anderssen, however, was never averse to a chess match and, unlike Staunton, readily accepted Morphy's challenge to a match in Paris. Morphy's victory immediately placed him in the fore of the world's masters.

Paul Morphy

Morphy is unique. In little more than a year he became world champion by beating almost all his serious competitors—a feat which has never been equaled. More important, in a sense, is the fact that millions since have looked upon him as the greatest and most brilliant master of all time, the champion of champions.

Paul Charles Morphy was born in New Orleans, June 22, 1837, of a Spanish-Irish father and a French Creole mother. Both his father and his uncle were enthusiastic chess players, and at ten Paul was taught the moves. In two brief years he had improved so incredibly that he not only beat everybody in sight but also defeated the well-known expert Loewenthal during a visit to New Orleans. Morphy is one of the four boy chess wonders who have become eminent in later life—the other three are Capablanca, Reshevsky, and Fischer.

School absorbed his attention until 1857, when he received a degree in law. Too young to practice in his native city, he devoted his time to travel and chess.

First stop was the American championship at New York in 1857. There were sixteen competitors, mostly mediocrities, but one, Louis Paulsen, was among the strongest alive. Morphy won decisively.

Then in June 1858, he went to England, where he announced his willingness to play a match with any first-class master. Money was no object, for his family was wealthy. Staunton was then English champion and one of the leading authorities on chess. Morphy's eagerness to meet Staunton, however, was matched only by the Englishman's desire to avoid a serious encounter, and a match could never be arranged. Morphy had to content himself with beating everybody else in sight, including his old antagonist Loewenthal. His superiority was so crushing that he gave Rev. Owen odds of Pawn and move and did not lose a single game.

From England Morphy went to Paris where he first swept Harrwitz out of the way and then, in December 1858, turned his attention to Anderssen, winner of the London 1851 tournament. Again Morphy scored a crushing victory.

At twenty-one Morphy was undisputed champion of the world. Back in New York, he was wined and dined. To his fellow Americans he was the hero of the hour.

Here, inexplicably, the epic march to glory ends, and the tragedy begins. After the Anderssen victory, except for a minor match with Mongredien, Morphy withdrew completely from serious chess. Steinitz, Kolisch, Zukertort, Blackburne appeared while he was still young and healthy, but Morphy merely deepened his pathological aversion to the game which had made him immortal.

Unable to make a success of his law career, partly because of the disturbed condition of the South after the Civil War, partly because people thought of him primarily as the chess champion, he slowly lost his mind. Most of the remaining years of his life were spent quietly with his family in New Orleans, where he died in 1884.

That chess had something to do with his mild derangement seems probable, but the exact connection is hard to ascertain.

The most likely explanation of the role that chess played in his mental life is this: Morphy was troubled by a peculiar dilemma, which has bothered many other great masters. Eminence in chess was a useless achievement to most of the people around him. Worse, he was afraid that people thought of him as a kind of freak or at best as a kind of unusual gambler who had learned all the tricks. That is why Morphy always insisted so strongly on his amateur status. Once when an admirer paid him a compliment by calling him the professional chess champion of the world, Morphy objected most earnestly on the grounds that his father had left him $136,472.23 and that he had never accepted a penny for any chess activities. (There is a rumor current that a girl refused him because she did not want to marry a mere chess player.) Then, Morphy's great goal in life, we have repeatedly been told, was to be a prominent lawyer, and he found that prospective clients gaped at the chess genius but could not take the lawyer seriously.

He must have reflected on how different the situation would have been if he had achieved equal prominence in some other field. Thus the twin delusions that chess was worthless and that he could not do anything else continually increased his isolation and finally led to loss of balance.

While Morphy was still alive, a curious development occurred. It was obvious to all that he was the most successful master yet seen. But, not content with such faint praise, his glorifiers went on to urge that he was the most brilliant genius who had ever appeared. It was claimed that he had the most marvelous intuition any mortal was ever granted, that he won his games by combinations of incredible beauty, that he could have beaten any of his successors with ridiculous ease. In short, Morphy became to millions the most gifted, the most dazzling, in every respect the greatest chess master of all time.

But if we examine Morphy's record and games critically, we cannot justify such extravaganza. And we are compelled to speak of it as the Morphy myth.

Morphy's games fall into two categories. Of the 403 contained in Maroczy's book, only 55 are tournament or match games; the remainder are offhand simultaneous or odds games. Few of the 55 serious games—the only kind modern masters include in such collections—can by any stretch be called brilliant. He beat his major rivals because he had a clearer grasp of the essentials of position play. In fact, Morphy is the first who really appreciated the logical basis of chess. He could combine as well as anybody, but he also knew under what circumstances combinations were possible—and in that respect he was twenty years ahead of his time.

There is a curious paradox about Morphy's games. He was so far ahead of his rivals that it is hard to find really outstanding examples of his skill. Imagine Joe Louis at his prime in a country where his most dangerous competitor was 5′ 6″ and weighed 150 pounds. Morphy was in this same position: his real abilities were hardly able to be tested. His games were won with effortless ease. We do not see sustained masterpieces; rather flashes of genius. The titanic struggles of the kind we see today he could not produce because he lacked the opposition. Morphy himself must have sensed this when he offered anybody in the world Pawn and move.

Anderssen could attack brilliantly but had an inadequate understanding of its positional basis. Morphy knew not only how to attack but also when—and that is why he won. The tragedy is that when others, like Steinitz, who knew when, came along, Morphy refused to meet them.

Even if the myth has been destroyed, Morphy remains one of the giants of chess history. His meteoric career together with the freshness and originality of his games will always continue to inspire all who love chess.

In the New York Tournament of 1857, Morphy's chief rival was the absent-minded Paulsen, whom he defeated in one of his most brilliant efforts:

PAULSEN **MORPHY**

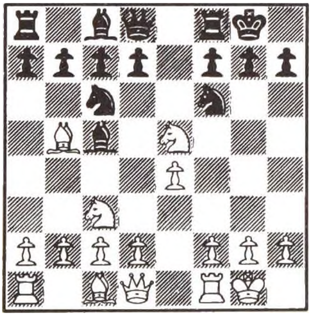
New York, 1857

Four Knights' Game

1 **P–K4** **P–K4**
2 **N–KB3** **N–QB3**
3 **N–B3** **N–B3**
4 **B–N5** **B–B4**

Preparing to sacrifice a pawn for quick development—a typical Morphy idea.

5 **O–O** **O–O**
6 **NxP**



6 . . . **R–K1**

With 6 . . . NxN 7 P–Q4 B–Q3 Black regains the pawn with a satisfactory game, but Morphy has other intentions.

7 **NxN** **QPxN**
8 **B–B4** **P–QN4**
9 **B–K2**

If instead 9 B–N3 B–KN5 *10* Q–K1 P–N5, and . . . RxP or . . . NxP is decisive.

9 . . . **NxP**
10 **NxN** **RxN**
11 **B–B3** **R–K3**

Morphy has regained the pawn, but actually White has a little the better of it if he plays P–Q3, P–B3, P–Q4, etc.

12 P–B3?

A positional blunder–typical of Morphy's opponents.

12 . . . Q–Q6

Naturally.

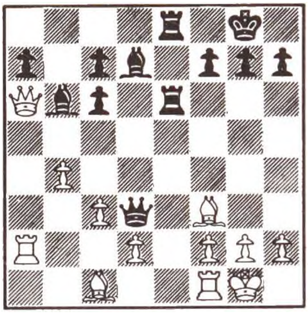
13 P–QN4

Now Paulsen must struggle to free his game.

13 . . . B–N3
14 P–QR4 PxP
15 QxP B–Q2
16 R–R2 QR–K1

Threatening QxRch and R–K8 mate.

17 Q–R6



17 . . . QxB!!

A decisive sacrifice.

18 PxQ R–N3ch
19 K–R1 B–R6
20 R–Q1

The only chance. If 20 R–N1 RxRch and 21 . . . R–K8 followed by mate.

20 . . . B–N7ch

The text is stronger than . . . BxP 21 Q–B1.

21 K–N1 QBxP dis ch
22 K–B1 B–N7ch

A minor inaccuracy. Quicker was 22 . . . R–N7, threatening . . . RxBPch; e.g., 23 Q–Q3 RxPch 24 K–N1 R–N7 dbl ch 25 K–R1 (or K–B1) R–N8 dbl ch and mate. But the text is also good enough.

23 K–N1 B–R6ch
24 K–R1 BxP
25 Q–B1

The only way to prevent mate.

25 . . . BxQ
26 RxB R–K7
27 R–R1 R–R3
28 P–Q4 B–K6
Resigns

For if 29 BxB R(R3)xPch and 30 . . . R(K7)–N7 mate.

Of the Morphy-Anderssen games none are very good by modern standards because Anderssen did not grasp the principles of development. Here is the best of the match:

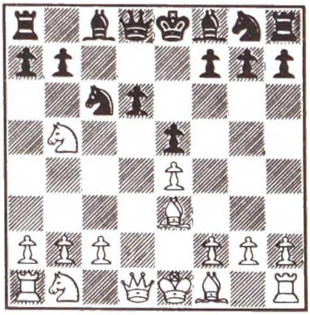
MORPHY ANDERSSEN

9th Match Game
Paris, 1858
Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 P–Q4 PxP
3 N–KB3 N–QB3
4 NxP P–K3
5 N–N5 P–Q3
6 B–KB4 P–K4?

Anderssen thinks nothing of weakening his pawn structure. . . . N–K4 was sounder.

7 B–K3



7 . . . P–B4?

Continuing a premature attack.

8 QN–B3 P–B5?
9 N–Q5! PxB
10 N(N5)–B7ch K–B2
11 Q–B3ch N–B3
12 B–B4 N–Q5?

Loses quickly. The best hope was *12* . . . K–N3, and if *13* Q–N3ch K–R3.

13 NxN dis ch P–Q4
14 BxPch K–N3
15 Q–R5ch KxN
16 PxP NxPch
17 K–K2 Resigns

There is no defense. If *17* . . . NxR *18* N–K8ch K–K2 *19* Q–B7 mate. Or if *17* . . . QxN *18* R–B1ch K–K2 *19* R–B7ch K–Q3 20 RxQ KxR *21* R–QB1.

A perennial favorite among the Morphy gems is an offhand game played at the Paris opera which for sheer elegance and simplicity can scarcely be surpassed. The story goes that it was played during *The Marriage of Figaro* and that the Paris editorials next day criticized the Duke of Braunschweig for being so sacrilegious as to play chess at the opera. The Duke sued—and lost!

MORPHY DUKE OF BRAUNSCHWEIG and COUNT ISOUARD
Paris, 1858
Philidor's Defense

1 P–K4 P–K4
2 N–KB3 P–Q3
3 P–Q4 B–N5?

A positional blunder. . . . N–Q2 or . . . N–KB3 was better.

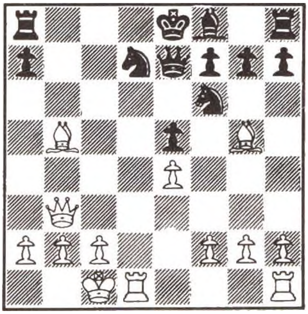
4 PxP BxN
5 QxB PxP
6 B–QB4 N–KB3?

Q–K2 first was necessary.

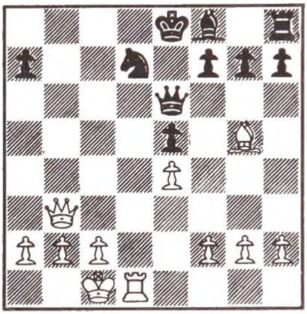
7 Q–QN3 Q–K2
8 N–B3

Spurning the pawn, capture of which allows the exchange of Queens after 8 QxP Q–N5ch.

8 . . . P–B3
9 B–KN5 P–QN4
10 NxP! PxN
11 BxPch QN–Q2
12 O-O-O!



12 . . . R–Q1
13 RxN! RxR
14 R–Q1 Q–K3
15 BxRch NxB



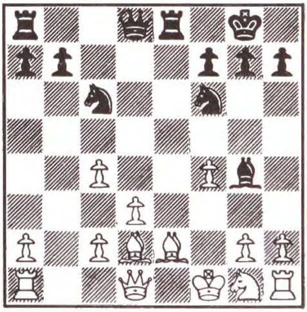
16 Q–N8ch! NxQ
17 R–Q8 mate

Here are a few more glorious Morphy brilliancies which helped to earn him his fame.

SCHULTEN **MORPHY**

New York, 1858

Morphy—TO PLAY



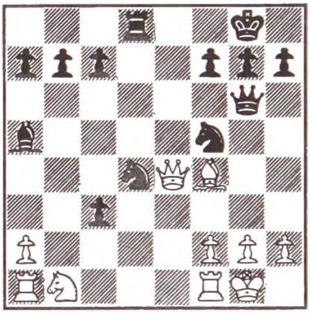
Schulten

1 . . . RxB!
2 NxR N–Q5
3 Q–N1 BxNch
4 K–B2 N–N5ch
5 K–N1 N–B6ch!
6 PxN Q–Q5ch
7 K–N2 Q–B7ch
8 K–R3 QxBPch
9 K–R4 N–K6
10 Q–N1 N–B4ch
11 K–N5 Q–R4 mate

MARACHE MORPHY

New York, 1857

Morphy—TO PLAY



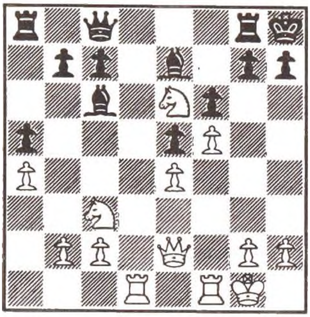
Marache

1 . . . N–KN6!
2 QxQ N(Q5)–K7 mate

This is reminiscent of the famous Lewitzky-Marshall sacrifice.

Morphy was also one of the great blindfold masters: he pushed the record up to eight boards simultaneously, a routine enough feat today, but unheard of in his time. Here is the conclusion of a blindfold game from an eight-board display at Paris, 1858.

Baucher



Morphy—TO PLAY

1	R–B3	B–Q2?
2	R–R3	P–R3

If 2 . . . BxN 3 RxPch KxR 4 Q–R5 mate.

3	Q–Q2!	K–R2
4	QxB	B–Q3
5	RxPch!!	KxR
6	R–Q3	K–R4
7	Q–B7ch	Resigns

Henry Edward Bird

Of the men whom Morphy defeated, apart from Anderssen, about the only one worthy of mention is the Englishman, Henry Edward Bird. When he met Morphy, Bird was only twenty-eight and virtually at the beginning of his chess career, for he remained active for almost fifty years after this. Bird was what we would call today a "natural player." He cared little for theory, that is, what others thought, and went his own way. The attack was his happy hunting ground, and he often disregarded positional considerations to pursue it for all it was worth. Against the great masters this policy did not work, but against lesser lights he produced many a sparkling gem. Incidentally, Bird was an outstanding accountant and became an authority on railway finance; in 1866 he published a book entitled *An Analysis of Railways in the United Kingdom*. Perhaps the meticulousness and precision of his profession led him to adopt a style of play in which he could give his imagination free reign. In his old age he suffered from a disease otherwise unknown to chess masters, gout!

Here is a beautiful example of Bird's ability to conduct a sustained attack. This game rightly earned him a brilliancy prize.

BIRD MASON

New York, 1876

French Defense

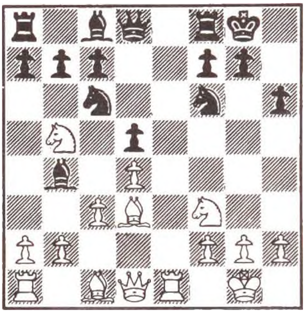
1	P–K4	P–K3
2	P–Q4	P–Q4
3	N–QB3	N–KB3
4	PxP	

Today considered a dull drawing variation. But Bird liked open positions regardless of their theoretical evaluation.

4	. . .	PxP
5	N–B3	B–Q3
6	B–Q3	O–O
7	O–O	P–KR3

To prevent B–KN5.

8 R–K1 N–QB3
9 N–QN5 B–QN5
10 P–B3



10 . . . B–R4

Avoiding complications. If *10* . . . B–K2 *11* B–KB4 P–QR3 *12* NxP N–KR4 *13* B–K5! with good attacking chances.

11 N–R3 B–KN5
12 N–B2 Q–Q2
13 P–QN4 B–N3
14 P–KR3 B–KR4
15 N–K3 KR–K1
16 P–N5! N–K2
17 P–N4 B–N3
18 N–K5 Q–B1
19 P–QR4 P–B3
20 PxP PxP
21 B–R3

Bird has built up a fine position, but Black still has many defensive chances.

21 . . . N–K5?
22 Q–B2 N–N4?

This faulty maneuver has served to make his position even worse.

23 BxN RxB
24 BxB PxB
25 QxP! NxPch
26 K–R2 N–B5
27 Q–B5!

Better than 27 QxBP Q–B1, and the attack passes to Black for a while.

27 . . . N–K3

If instead 27 . . . QxQ 28 NxQ R(K2)–K1 29 K–N3 wins easily enough.

28 N–N2 Q–B2?

A poor move in a bad position, but the only hope was 28 . . . B–B2. Had he played that, however, this game would never have been included in this collection.

29 P–R5 BxRP
30 RxB! R–KB1

Not 30 . . . QxR *31* NxP.

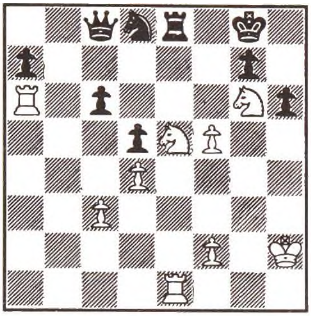
31 R–R6!!?

The Queen sacrifice is the real point of the combination.

31 . . . RxQ
32 PxR N–Q1??

Making Bird's life easy. After 32 . . . N–N4, threatening . . . N–B6ch, the outcome is most unclear.

33 N–KB4 Q–B1
34 N(B4)–N6 R–K1



35 NxP!!

This second sacrifice is correct in all variations. If 35 . . . RxR 36 N(B6)–K7ch wins the Queen.

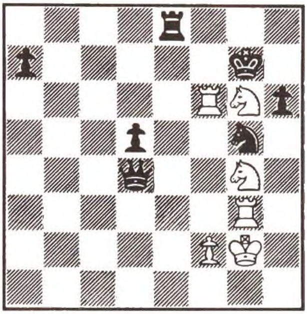
35 . . .	**Q–B2ch**
36 N(B6)–K5	**QxP**
37 R–K3	**Q–Q7**

Not 37 . . . QxP 38 N–B3! and wins.

38 K–N2	**QxP**
39 P–B6!	**PxP**

More or less forced.

40 RxBP	**N–K3**
41 R–KN3	**N–N4**
42 N–N4	**K–N2**



43 N–B4!!

Preventing . . . QxR by N–R5ch.

43 . . .	**Q–K5ch**
44 K–R2	**N–R2**
45 N–R5ch	**K–R1**
46 RxP	**Q–B7**
47 N(R5)–B6	**R–K2**
48 K–N2	**P–Q5**
49 N–K5!	**Q–B1**

To prevent R–N8 mate. If 49 . . . R–KN2 50 N–B7ch! RxN 51 R–N8 mate.

50 N–N6ch	**Resigns**

4.

The Age of Steinitz

Wilhelm Steinitz

AFTER the disappearance of Morphy from the international arena, Anderssen remained the strongest player until he was superseded by the man who was destined to revolutionize the course of chess history, Wilhelm Steinitz.

In more than one way Steinitz was a unique phenomenon in the chess world. He was the first to claim the title of world champion officially; he was the first who evolved any kind of theory which made sense. He elaborated the principles of position play which have since become the ABC of all chess knowledge. He was the first completely professional chess master who devoted his entire life to the game. And he was the first who showed that writing about chess can produce good literature.

Wilhelm Steinitz was born at Prague, Bohemia, in 1836. We have little knowledge of what he did before he became a chess master, but by 1862, at the age of twenty-six, he had already made a name for himself in Austria and was sent as a representative of his native country to the London tournament of 1862. In this affair he did poorly, finishing sixth, but he found conditions sufficiently favorable in London to induce him to remain and make a living at chess. Evidently his main source of income for quite a while was offhand games at Simpson's Divan and various chess clubs; the more lucrative columns came later.

Until 1866 Steinitz was just another strong foreign master to the English; London was full of them. In that year a match was arranged between him and Anderssen, which Steinitz won by a score of 8 to 6. Immediately he began to look upon himself as the world champion, although at the time nothing was officially at stake, and for many years to come little was said in print about the title. But today we date Steinitz's reign from 1866, the year he beat Anderssen, to 1894, the year he lost to Lasker. To hold the title for twenty-eight years was remarkable indeed; to do it as Steinitz did even more so. For he actively sought out every one of his major rivals, and all who accepted were decisively trounced in individual match play.

Unlike his successors, Steinitz's fame did not rest chiefly on tournament play. There were several reasons for this, but the chief one was that active tournaments were few and far between. The modern master can easily play in three strong tournaments a year if he is so minded, but Steinitz could hardly find one every three or four years. And then his temperament made him more partial to match play. It was in individual encounters that he shone; up to the time he met Lasker he won every match he ever played. No doubt his personality accounts for this preference; Steinitz was a man who burned with the ambition to prove that he was the best in the world. He was always ready to accept any challenge, no matter who offered it. If a personal encounter was impossible, he went to great lengths to demonstrate his superiority. For example, for many years a fierce controversy raged about who was better, Morphy or Steinitz. In countless articles Steinitz never tired of proving over and over again how many blunders Morphy had been guilty of, how ignorant he was of the principles of position play, and so on.

In his match with Anderssen, Steinitz still adhered to the conventional gambit style of his day. But soon after he began to evolve a new approach to chess, which came to be known as the "modern" school, in contrast to the so-called classical school of Anderssen. In this approach Steinitz established the principles of position play, especially the supreme importance of the center, which had been almost completely neglected before his time.

Like many another world champion after him, Steinitz had many detractors whom he considered personal enemies and vigorously attacked in print with such epithets as "inky ruffians" and "literary hooters." While some of the attacks on Steinitz were personal, occasioned by his stubborn pride and penchant for literary arguments, most of them came from people who glorified the "good old days," thereby setting a pattern which has remained ever since. By the time Steinitz was champion, chess was popularized. All the leading European newspapers had columns. Many chess magazines were founded; some, like the *British Chess Magazine*, are still being published. Most of the editors of these publications were second-rate masters who at once envied Steinitz's genius and failed to understand the really revolutionary significance of his theories. Since Steinitz's games, unlike those of his predecessors, needed an annotator to explain them to the public, the uninstructed reader found himself baffled by what Steinitz was doing or turned away from his play with annoyance or boredom. The "critics," writing for such a public, could readily find agreement when they criticized his play or his ideas.

By 1871 Steinitz's enemies in London had reached the stage where they imported a foreign player, Zukertort, to dethrone him. This attempt was pathetically unsuccessful, for he ripped Zukertort by 7 to 1; nevertheless the arguments were so heated that for almost ten years Steinitz was virtually inactive as a player, confining himself to writing and journalism. In 1883, disheartened by what he called "literary hooting" in England, he sailed for the United States, where he remained with brief interruptions until his death in 1900.

Aside from his contributions as a player, Steinitz ranks among the great writers on the game. His journal (*The Chess International*) is one of the masterpieces of chess literature and can still be read with profit by the young masters.

It was the position play which Steinitz developed in such magnificent detail that won him his victories. The second match with Zukertort (the first was in 1872), in 1886, is a case in point. Zukertort had a flair for combinative play which was certainly not inferior to Steinitz's, but he took too many chances with his pawn structure. In this game we have an example of how Steinitz outmaneuvered him by simple positional principles.

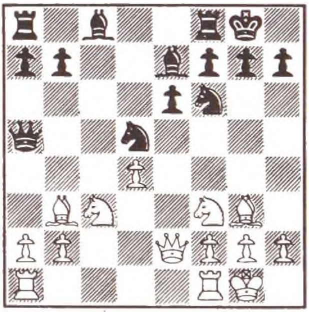
ZUKERTORT STEINITZ

9th Match Game
New Orleans, 1886
Queen's Gambit Accepted

1	P–Q4	P–Q4
2	P–QB4	P–K3

The delayed acceptance of the gambit is not so good as the immediate 2 . . . PxP. But all this was uncharted territory in 1886.

3	N–QB3	N–KB3
4	N–B3	PxP
5	P–K3	P–B4
6	BxP	PxP
7	PxP	B–K2
8	O–O	O–O
9	Q–K2	QN–Q2
10	B–N3	N–N3
11	B–KB4	N(N3)–Q4
12	B–N3	Q–R4



A variation which in one form or another was contested innumerable times between these two opponents. Black has his Rock of Gibraltar at Q4, solid unchallengeable control of the center, which Steinitz rightly maintained gave Black the better of the game from a theoretical point of view, though the tactical question always remains of how long this control can be maintained. White on the other hand must aim for a rather vague attack.

13 QR–B1 B–Q2
14 N–K5 KR–Q1
15 Q–B3?

Typical of his positional confusion. If anything is to be done with such a position it must come via P–B4–B5 and B–KR4.

15 . . . B–K1
16 KR–K1 QR–B1
17 B–KR4 NxN

Gives up the center for the two "hanging pawns." As usual, this steers the game into the endgame channels which Steinitz loved.

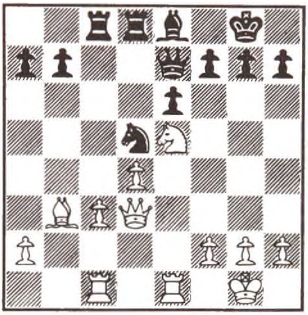
18 PxN Q–B2
19 Q–Q3

With no clear-cut plan. 19 B–N3 was better.

19 . . . N–Q4

Whereas Steinitz is clear about his goals–exchange and head for the ending, when White's weak pawns will be indefensible.

20 BxB QxB



21 BxN??

No modern master of Zukertort's stature could conceivably make such a positional blunder.

21 . . . RxB
22 P–QB4 R(Q4)–Q1
23 R–K3

This belated attempt to attack brings on his final downfall.

23 . . . Q–Q3
24 R–Q1 P–B3
25 R–R3 P–KR3
26 N–N4 Q–B5
27 N–K3 B–R5!
28 R–B3 Q–Q3
29 R–Q2 B–B3
30 R–N3 P–B4
31 R–N6 B–K5
32 Q–N3 K–R2!

Simple and decisive. If now 33 R–N3 P–B5 wins.

33 P–B5 RxP
34 RxP R–B8ch
35 N–Q1 Q–B5
36 Q–N2 R–N8
37 Q–B3 R–QB1!
38 RxB QxR (K5)
Resigns

Like Morphy, Steinitz realized that correct positional play, dry though it may first appear, frequently leads to the most beautiful combinative play. Here is a case in point, one which brings out Steinitz's unique gifts more than any other he ever played.

STEINITZ **TCHIGORIN**

4th Match Game
Havana, 1892
Ruy Lopez

1	P–K4	P–K4
2	N–KB3	N–QB3
3	B–N5	N–B3
4	P–Q3	

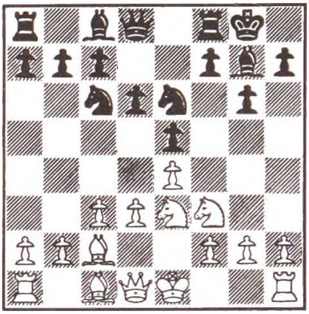
The Steinitz variation. The idea is to hold the center solid while preparing a flank attack.

4	. . .	P–Q3
5	P–B3	P–KN3
6	QN–Q2	B–N2
7	N–B1	O–O

Premature. Black does better to develop first, attempt a break in the center, and wait for White to clarify his plans.

8	B–QR4	N–Q2
9	N–K3	N–B4
10	B–B2	N–K3?

Pointless. Better was P–B4 immediately. Again we see here that whereas Steinitz has a clear-cut plan in mind, Tchigorin wavers.



11 P–KR4!

The purpose of White's maneuvers now becomes clear. With the center solidified an attack against the Kingside is initiated.

11	. . .	N–K2
12	P–R5	P–Q4
13	RPxP	BPxP
14	PxP	NxP
15	NxN	QxN
16	B–N3	Q–B3
17	Q–K2	B–Q2
18	B–K3	

Threatening N–N5, for if in reply 18 . . . QxNP 19 O–O–O!.

18	. . .	K–R1
19	O–O–O	QR–K1
20	Q–B1!	

Preparing P–Q4 and sundry things.

20	. . .	P–QR4

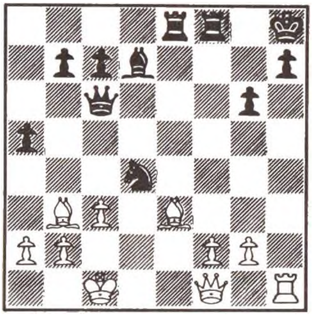
Useless, but not more so than other moves. The best try was . . . N–B5.

21	P–Q4	PxP
22	NxP	

The point of his 20th move now becomes clear. If 22 . . . NxN 23 RxPch!! KxR 24 Q–R1ch and mates shortly.

22 . . .	BxN
23 RxB!	NxR

It was hopeless anyhow.



24 RxPch	KxR
25 Q–R1ch	K–N2
26 B–R6ch	K–B3
27 Q–R4ch	K–K4
28 QxNch	Resigns

One move before mate.

Steinitz could, of course, also produce many brilliancies in the classical style. Here is a game with a combination which ranks among the most profound ever made.

STEINITZ VON BARDELEBEN

Hastings, 1895

Giuoco Piano

1 P–K4	P–K4
2 N–KB3	N–QB3
3 B–B4	B–B4
4 P–B3	N–B3
5 P–Q4	PxP
6 PxP	B–N5ch
7 N–B3	

A variation which lost Steinitz the championship to Lasker, but with which he stubbornly persisted.

7 . . .	P–Q4

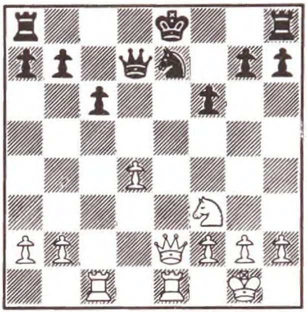
Lasker won several times with 7 . . . NxP 8 O–O BxN 9 PxB P–Q4. Correct is 8 . . . BxN 9 P–Q5, with complications–theoretically equal.

8 PxP	KNxP
9 O–O	B–K3
10 B–KN5	B–K2
11 BxN	QBxB
12 NxB	QxN
13 BxB	NxB?

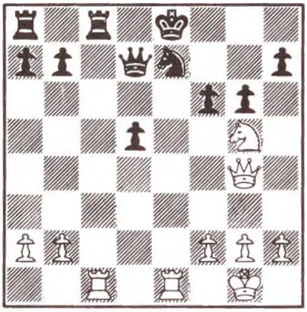
After this Black remains tied up. 13 . . . KxB!, and if 14 R–K1ch K–B1! was preferable.

14 R–K1	P–KB3
15 Q–K2	Q–Q2
16 QR–B1	P–B3?

Allowing the combination. The best chance was 16 . . . K–B2 17 QxNch QxQ 18 RxQch KxR 19 RxPch, and White still has the winning chances–but the endgame is difficult.



17 P–Q5!!	PxP
18 N–Q4	K–B2
19 N–K6	KR–QB1
20 Q–N4!	P–KN3
21 N–N5ch	K–K1



22 RxNch!!! K–B1

Now every White piece is *en prise*. If instead 22 . . . KxR 23 R–K1ch K–Q3 24 Q–N4ch K–B2 25 N–K6ch K–N1 26 Q–B4ch and wins.

23 R–B7ch!	K–N1
24 R–N7ch!	K–R1

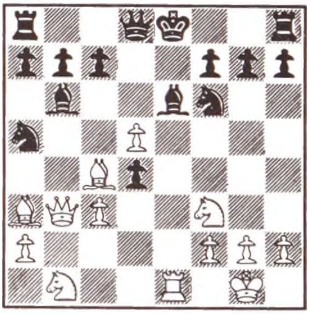
Note how the Rook cannot be taken. If . . . KxR, the Queen is captured with check, while if . . . QxR, the Rook is captured with check.

25 RxPch Resigns

For if 25 . . . K–N1, White has a conclusive win or a mate in ten moves as Steinitz demonstrated at the time: 25 . . . K–N1 26 R–N7ch K–R1 27 Q–R4ch KxR 28 Q–R7ch K–B1 29 Q–R8ch K–K2 30 Q–N7ch K–K1 31 Q–N8ch K–K2 32 Q–B7ch K–Q1 33 Q–B8ch Q–K1 34 N–B7ch K–Q2 35 Q–Q6 mate.

Here are a few more flashes of Steinitz's genius:

Mr. Rock

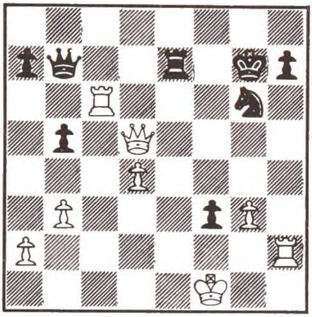


Steinitz—TO PLAY

London, 1863 (QR odds)

1 PxB!	NxQ
2 PxPch	K–Q2
3 B–K6ch	K–B3
4 N–K5ch	K–N4
5 B–B4ch	K–R4
6 B–N4ch	K–R5
7 PxN mate	

Zukertort



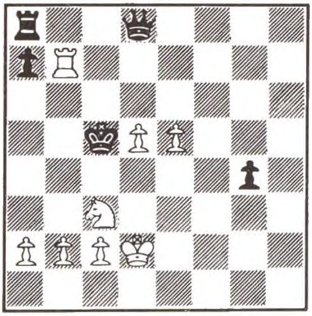
Steinitz—TO PLAY

Match: London, 1872

1	RxPch	KxR
2	Q–R5ch	K–N1
3	RxNch	R–N2
4	R–KR6	K–B1
5	R–R8ch	Resigns

For if 5 . . . K–K2 6 Q–K5ch K–B2 7 Q–K8ch K–B3 8 R–R6ch K–B4 9 Q–K5ch K–N5 *10* Q–B4 mate.

Dr. Simonson

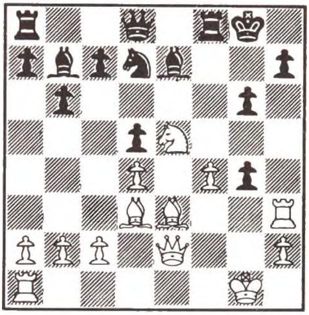


Steinitz—TO PLAY

New York, 1883 (simultaneous exhibition)

1	K–Q3!!	Q–R4
2	P–N4ch	QxP
3	N–K4ch and wins.	

A. Mongredien



Steinitz—TO PLAY

London, 1862

1	RxP!!	NxN
2	BPxN	KxR
3	QxP	KR–N1
4	Q–R5ch	K–N2
5	Q–R6ch	K–B2
6	Q–R7ch	K–K3
7	Q–R3ch	K–B2
8	R–B1ch	K–K1
9	Q–K6	R–N2
10	B–N5	Q–Q2
11	BxPch	RxB
12	QxRch	K–Q1
13	R–B8ch	Q–K1
14	QxQ mate	

Several of Steinitz's contemporaries deserve attention. Up to his time, the world champion had towered head and shoulders above all rivals; but from Steinitz on, it was to be *primus inter pares*. Men such as Zukertort and Anderssen repeatedly outdistanced Steinitz in tournaments and individual games. Henceforth much more must be said of the contenders for the world's title.

Ignatz Kolisch

Kolisch stands out in chess history for a most curious reason—he made a fortune! In 1868 he met one of the Rothschilds in Vienna, who was so taken by his combination of good manners and good chess that he started him in business, where Kolisch did remarkably well.

Kolisch was born in Hungary in 1837 and, as was then the custom, went to London as soon as he had achieved something of a reputation. In 1858 he had drawn a match with Anderssen; consequently he was already a player of some renown. In 1861 Kolisch challenged Morphy to a match, but it did not materialize because of Morphy's retirement from the game.

Although his career lasted only about ten years, Kolisch ranked among the great of his day. His outstanding achievement, apart from the drawn match with Anderssen, was first prize in the Paris Tournament of 1867, 1½ points ahead of Steinitz.

Kolisch's play was in the classical tradition. Here is a pretty game against a man who both won and lost many great games.

KOLISCH ANDERSSEN

London, 1861

Evans Gambit

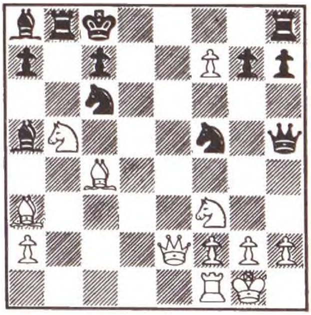
1	P-K4	P-K4
2	N-KB3	N-QB3
3	B-B4	B-B4
4	P-QN4	BxP
5	P-B3	B-R4
6	P-Q4	PxP
7	O-O	PxP

Dangerous for Black.

8	Q-N3	Q-B3
9	P-K5	Q-N3
10	NxP	P-QN4

To gain time.

11	NxP	R-N1
12	Q-K3	KN-K2
13	Q-K2	Q-R4
14	B-R3	B-N2
15	QR-Q1	N-B4?
16	RxP!!	KxR
17	P-K6ch	K-B1
18	PxP	B-R1



19 NxPch!! NxN

Or *19* . . . K–N2 *20* NxN KxN *21* Q–K6ch N–Q3 *22* N–Q4ch K–N3 *23* BxN PxB *24* QxPch K–N2 *25* Q–B6ch K–R2 *26* Q–R6 mate.

20 Q–K6ch	**K–Q1**
21 R–Q1ch	**N–Q3**
22 RxNch	

An unnecessary brilliancy—22 BxN was quicker.

22 . . .	**PxR**
23 QxPch	**K–B1**
24 B–K6ch	**K–N2**
25 B–Q5ch	**QxB**

Forced, for if 25 . . . K–B1 26 Q–K6ch K–B2 27 B–Q6ch and mates shortly.

26 QxQch	**K–R3**
27 Q–B4ch	**K–N2**
28 Q–K4ch	**N–B3**
29 N–K5	**K–R3**
30 Q–B4ch	**K–R2**
31 B–B5ch	**R–N3**
32 BxRch	**BxB**
33 NxNch	**BxN**
34 QxB	**Resigns**

Johannes Herrmann Zukertort

By far the greatest of Steinitz's rivals was Johannes Herrmann Zukertort. Born in 1842 in Lublin, in what was then Russian Poland, he was of mixed Prussian and Polish descent. He was a man of considerable attainments. At one time he was music critic of the leading Silesian journal; he was a foreign correspondent, linguist, military man, musician, chess master all rolled into one.

In 1872 he was brought to London to challenge Steinitz and remained there until his premature death in 1889. After he came to London, chess became the ruling passion of his life, and his one overwhelming ambition was to dethrone Steinitz. The two could not agree on terms for a return match until 1886, when it was financed in the United States. Zukertort lost—his spirit was so badly broken that he lived on only a short while.

The greatest triumph of Zukertort's career came at London in 1883, where he won first prize ahead of Steinitz and all the other leading masters of the day. His victory over Blackburne in this contest was described by Steinitz as "one of the most brilliant games on record."

ZUKERTORT BLACKBURNE

London, 1883

Queen's Gambit Declined

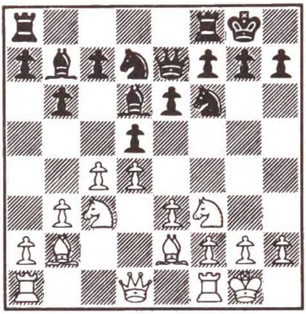
1 P–QB4

Like another eminent master of the attack, the American Frank Marshall, Zukertort preferred to commence with close openings.

See also Capa[illegible] in

1 . . .	**P–K3**
2 P–K3	**N–KB3**
3 N–KB3	**P–QN3**
4 B–K2	**B–N2**
5 O–O	**P–Q4**
6 P–Q4	**B–Q3**
7 N–B3	**O–O**
8 P–QN3	**QN–Q2**
9 B–N2	**Q–K2?**

Antipositional—first . . . P–QR3 was essential. Such precautions, which are today routine in every club tournament, were still novel then.



10 N–QN5	N–K5
11 NxB	PxN
12 N–Q2	QN–B3
13 P–B3	NxN
14 QxN	PxP

Again faulty.

15 BxP	P–Q4

To stop P–K4, but it does so only temporarily.

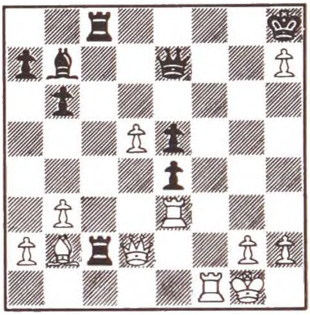
16 B–Q3	KR–B1
17 QR–K1	R–B2
18 P–K4	

Black has been completely outplayed.

18 . . .	QR–B1
19 P–K5	N–K1
20 P–B4	P–N3
21 R–K3	

Threatening R–R3 followed by P–B5 and Q–R6.

21 . . .	P–B4
22 PxP e.p.	NxP
23 P–B5	N–K5
24 BxN	PxB
25 PxNP!!	R–B7
26 PxPch	K–R1
27 P–Q5 dis ch	P–K4



28 Q–N4!!	R(B1)–B4
29 R–B8ch	KxP
30 QxPch	K–N2
31 BxPch	KxR
32 B–N7ch!!	

The final surprise. If 32 . . . QxB 33 Q–K8 mate.

32 . . .	K–N1
33 QxQ	Resigns

Like so many other up-and-coming masters of his day, Zukertort sat at the feet of the venerable Anderssen. The two are supposed to have played more than 6,000 games together. Here is one of the prettiest on record.

ZUKERTORT ANDERSSEN

Berlin, 1865

Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4	P–QB4
2 N–KB3	P–K3

3	P–Q4	PxP
4	NxP	N–KB3
5	N–QB3	B–N5
6	B–Q3	

Weak by modern theory. P–K5 is considered best.

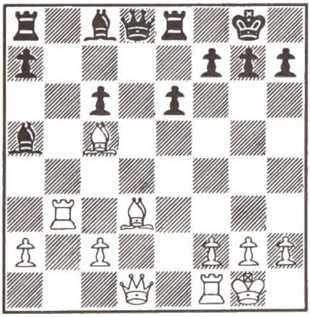
6	. . .	N–B3
7	B–K3	P–Q4
8	PxP	NxP
9	O–O	N(Q4)xN?

Both sides mishandle the opening. 9 . . . NxB was better, to be followed by the simple *10* . . . O–O.

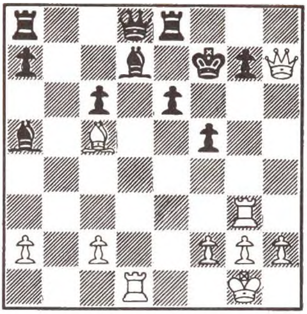
10	PxN	BxP
11	NxN	PxN
12	R–N1	O–O?
13	R–N3	B–R4

On the alternative *13* . . . B–B3 *14* B–B5 wins too; e.g., *14* . . . R–K1 *15* BxPch KxB *16* Q–R5ch K–N1 *17* R–KR3.

14	B–QB5	R–K1



15	BxPch!	KxB
16	R–R3ch	K–N1
17	Q–R5	P–B4
18	R–Q1!	B–Q2
19	Q–R7ch	K–B2
20	R–KN3	



20	. . .	B–B6

Black is lost. If instead . . . R–KN1 *21* Q–N6 mate.

21	Q–N6ch	K–N1
22	RxB(B3)	P–B5
23	R–KR3	R–K2
24	Q–R7ch	K–B2
25	Q–R5ch	K–N1
26	BxR	QxB
27	Q–R8ch	K–B2
28	QxR	Resigns

Joseph Henry Blackburne

Blackburne, like Bird, was another of those natural geniuses whom England has so often produced. At eighteen he took part in one of Morphy's blindfold exhibitions. Within a month he was successfully playing ten blindfold games simultaneously, a figure which he later increased to sixteen. He utilized his native gift for the game by becoming a professional, and the remainder of his life was devoted to it.

Love for study did not fit in with Blackburne's outgoing personality; he remained a "natural player" with all the advantages and disadvantages of that style. Against inferior masters he could produce one brilliancy after another, but against Steinitz he came to grief because of his faulty positional play.

Blackburne was one of the historic figures of British chess, and stories about him are still going the rounds. One story has it that he was so enraged at Steinitz during one of their match games that he picked him up and almost threw him out of the window. His capacity for Scotch is said to have rivaled that of some other great masters. He strikes one as an uncomplicated soul who loved chess and exuberant living.

Blackburne's greatest success came at Berlin in 1881, where he finished first, ahead of Zukertort and every other leading master with the exception of Steinitz, who did not participate. Here is his most brilliant game in that event.

BLACKBURNE SCHWARZ

Berlin, 1881

French Defense

1	P–K4	P–K3
2	P–Q4	P–Q4
3	N–QB3	N–KB3
4	PxP	PxP
5	N–B3	B–Q3
6	B–Q3	P–B3
7	O–O	O–O
8	N–K2	B–KN5
9	N–N3	Q–B2
10	B–K3	QN–Q2
11	Q–Q2	KR–K1

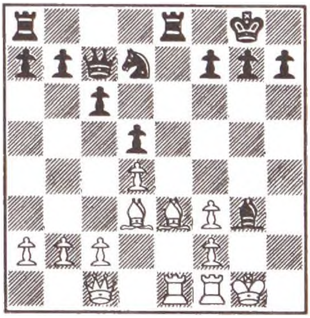
An unpromising opening variation for White.

12	QR–K1	N–K5
13	Q–B1	QBxN

Better *13* . . . P–KB4.

14	PxB	NxN
15	RPxN	BxP

Playing for a draw; if *16* PxB QxPch and perpetual check.

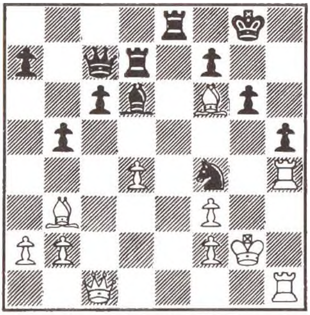


16	K–N2!	B–Q3
17	R–R1	N–B1
18	R–R3	P–KN3
19	R(K1)–R1	QR–Q1
20	B–KN5	R–Q2
21	P–QB4	

Steinitz writes: "White's design, especially from the 21st move in combination with the brilliant finish, belongs to the finest efforts of chess genius in modern match play."

21	. . .	PxP
22	BxBP	P–KR4
23	R–R4	P–N4
24	B–N3	N–K3
25	B–B6	N–B5ch

Loses, but there was no sufficient defense. If 25 . . . B–K2 26 BxN PxB 27 Q–N5 wins.



26	QxN!!	BxQ
27	RxP	PxR
28	RxP	Resigns

Mate cannot be averted.

Even in his later years Blackburne was a competitor to be feared. Here is his beautiful win against the then world champion, Emanuel Lasker. Blackburne was fifty-seven years old at the time.

LASKER **BLACKBURNE**

London, 1899

Ruy Lopez

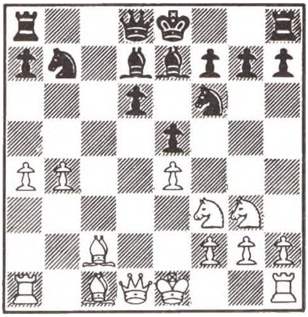
1	P–K4	P–K4
2	N–KB3	N–QB3
3	B–N5	P–Q3
4	P–Q4	B–Q2
5	P–Q5	

An experiment.

5	. . .	N–N1
6	B–Q3	B–K2
7	N–B3	N–KB3
8	N–K2	P–B3
9	P–B4	N–R3
10	N–N3	N–B4
11	B–B2	P–QN4

Positionally poor, but he stakes everything on the attack.

12	P–N4	N–N2
13	QPxP	BxP
14	PxP	BxNP
15	P–QR4	B–Q2



Certainly not a position in which anyone playing Black would expect to beat a Lasker.

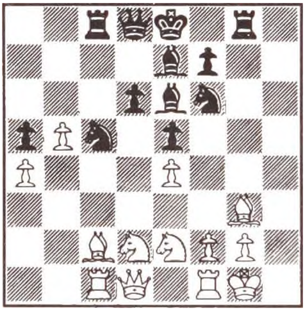
16	O–O	P–N3
17	P–R3	P–KR4

Typically Blackburne.

18	B–K3	P–R4
19	P–N5	R–QB1
20	R–B1	N–B4
21	N–Q2	P–R5
22	N–K2	P–N4!

The attack begins!

23	BxP	R–KN1
24	BxP	BxRP
25	B–KN3	B–K3



Black has strong Knights–and open files.

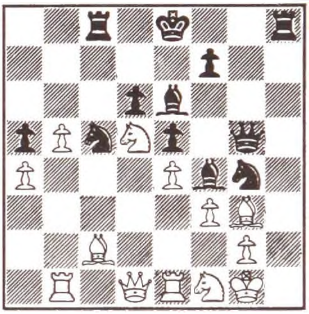
26	R–K1	N–N5!
27	N–B1	B–N4!
28	R–N1	R–KR1

A comparison of this position with the previous diagram shows how much progress Black has made. The immediate threat is Q–B3–R3.

29	N–B3	

So that if . . . Q–B3 30 P–B3.

29	. . .	B–KB5!
30	N–Q5	Q–N4
31	P–B3	



31	. . .	R–R8ch!!
32	KxR	BxB
33	NxB	

If 33 PxN Q–R5ch and mate next

33	. . .	N–B7ch
34	K–N1	NxQ
35	N–B5	BxN(B4)
36	PxB	Q–Q7

The remainder is simple.

37	R(K1)xN	QxB
38	QR–B1	QxBP
39	N–N6	R–Q1
40	N–B4	N–N2
41	N–K3	Q–B5
42	K–B2	QxRP
43	R–B7	N–B4
44	R–KR1	R–Q2
45	R–B8ch	K–K2
46	R(R1)–R8	Q–Q5
	Resigns	

Mikhail Ivanovich Tchigorin

The third of Steinitz's great rivals was the Russian, Mikhail Ivanovich Tchigorin. As with so many other masters of his day, and contrary to the rule nowadays, Tchigorin developed late. Born in 1850, he did not come into prominence until 1880 when he beat Schiffers for the Russian Championship.

This question of the age at which a chess master reaches renown is of considerable interest. Before Lasker, with the exception of Morphy, most of the stars of the royal game were in their late twenties or early thirties before they became famous; some did not even learn the moves before twenty. In Lasker's time the masters made their mark in their early twenties. For the past thirtv years, almost all the leading players have scored some notable victory before their twenty-first birthday. Fischer, who won the U.S. Championship at age fourteen, is the best known. It must be the increasing popularity of chess and the growing emphasis on youthful achievement in all fields which accounts for this shift.

Tchigorin was not a professional chess player; he was a government official. But he devoted all of his leisure time to the game, founded the St. Petersburg Chess Club, and was the inspiration for Russian chess masters for twenty years. In recent times there has been a Tchigorin revival in Russia, where he has been hailed as the founder of the modern school.

Tchigorin's major successes were in the era of the gay nineties. In 1889 he tied for first at New York, in 1893 he drew a match with Tarrasch, in 1895 he finished second at Hastings. Against Steinitz and Lasker he did poorly; but for them, he had no superior in his heyday.

Tchigorin has gone down in history as a master of the "old" school, his play being full of dashing brilliancies. This is certainly true, but not completely. His love for the attack was proverbial; yet he also developed a number of highlv positional defenses, of which Tchigorin's Defense in the Ruy Lopez and to the Queen's Gambit are the best known.

One of Tchigorin's outstanding victories was his second prize at Hastings, 1895, a tournament which assembled all the leading masters of the day for the first time. Tchigorin won his first three games, against Pillsbury, Lasker, and Mason, but his play later became rather uneven. The first round game against the newcomer Pillsbury turned out to be an epic struggle. At that time nobody even dared to suspect that Pillsbury would finish first, much less give Tchigorin such a tussle. Here is the game, one in which the caliber of both attack and defense is sensational:

TCHIGORIN **PILLSBURY**

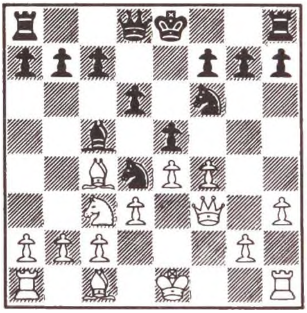
Hastings, 1895

King's Gambit Declined

1 P–K4	P–K4
2 P–KB4	B–B4
3 N–KB3	P–Q3
4 B–B4	N–QB3
5 N–B3	N–B3
6 P–Q3	B–KN5

6 . . . B–K3 is today considered better.

7 P–KR3	BxN
8 QxB	N–Q5



9 Q–N3

Quite willing to enter on complications.

9 . . .	NxPch?

9 . . . PxP! is the sharpest.

10 K–Q1	NxR
11 QxNP	K–Q2

All standard play at the time. If *11* . . . R–KB1? *12* PxP PxP *13* R–B1 B–K2 *14* B–KN5 and wins.

12 PxP	PxP
13 R–B1	B–K2
14 QxBP?	

Lasker felt that *14* B–KN5 was not only stronger but probably decisive; e.g., *14* . . . R–KN1 *15* QxBP RxB *16* Q–K6ch K–K1 *17* RxN R–N2 *18* N–Q5 Q–Q3 *19* NxPch QxN *20* B–N5ch K–Q1 *21* R–B8ch BxR *22* Q–K8 mate.

14 . . .	K–B1
15 B–KN5	R–KB1
16 Q–K6ch	K–N1
17 B–KR6	R–K1
18 QxP	

White is a full Rook behind; yet his attack is most potent.

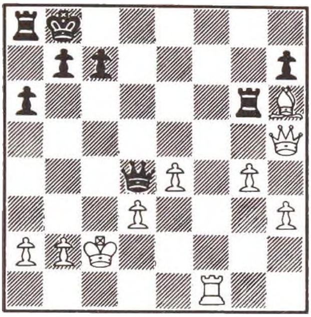
18 . . .	N–Q2
19 Q–KR5	N–N3

Lasker recommends instead *19* . . . B–B1 *20* B–KN5 B–K2 with a draw as the best course for both. But both want to win!

20 B–Q5	P–QR3
21 K–Q2	NxB
22 NxN	R–N1
23 P–KN4	B–N5ch?

Too ingenious. . . . B–B4 was better.

24 NxB	Q–Q5
25 N–B2	NxN
26 KxN	R–N3



Time to take stock. White has emerged from the complications with two pawns for the exchange and a well-developed position. He stands better.

27	B–Q2	R–Q3
28	R–B3	Q–R5ch
29	K–B1	QxRP
30	B–B3	R–QB3
31	QxP	P–N4
32	Q–K7	Q–N6
33	K–Q2	P–R4
34	R–B5!	

Preventing . . . P–N5.

34	. . .	K–N2
35	R–QB5	R(R1)–R3
36	P–N5	

The decisive advance begins.

36	. . .	RxR
37	QxR	R–QB3
38	Q–Q5	Q–R5

The ending is hopeless for Black after the exchange of Queens.

39	P–N6	P–N5
40	P–N7!	

Anyhow!

40	. . .	PxBch
41	PxP	Q–R6

Black has no check.

42	P–N8=Q	QxPch
43	K–K2	Q–B7ch
44	K–B3	Q–Q8ch
45	K–N3	Q–N8ch
46	K–R4	Q–B7ch
47	K–R5	Q–B6ch
48	Q–N4	Q–B3
49	Q(N4)–B5	Q–R3ch
50	K–N4	Resigns

Tchigorin was also capable of superlative positional play. Here is a game which is so modern that it could have been played yesterday:

SCHLECHTER TCHIGORIN

Cambridge Springs, 1904

Ruy Lopez

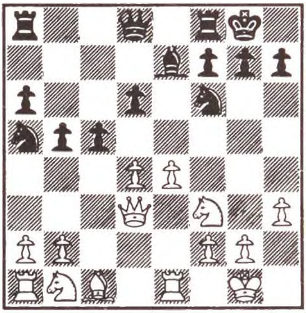
1	P–K4	P–K4
2	N–KB3	N–QB3
3	B–N5	P–QR3
4	B–R4	N–B3
5	O–O	B–K2
6	R–K1	P–QN4
7	B–N3	P–Q3
8	P–B3	O–O
9	P–KR3	B–K3

Safer is 9 . . . N–QR4. Bronstein later revived the text move against Botvinnik at Moscow, 1944; the game continued: *10* P–Q4 BxB *11* QxB PxP *12* NxP NxN *13* PxN P–B4 *14* PxP PxP *15* P–K5 N–Q2 *16* P–QR4 with a slight advantage.

The usual move nowadays has

become 9 . . . N–N1, the Breyer Defense.

10 P–Q4 PxP
11 PxP BxB
12 QxB N–QR4
13 Q–Q3 P–B4



Black has an endgame advantage in his Q-side pawn majority, while White relies on his K-side attack.

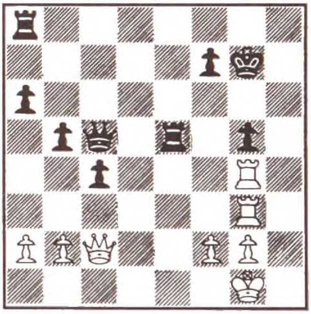
14 N–B3 N–B3
15 B–N5 P–R3
16 B–R4 R–K1
17 QR–Q1 P–B5!
18 Q–N1 N–QN5
19 P–K5 N(B3)–Q4
20 BxB QxB
21 NxN NxN
22 R–K4

As Chernev points out, the roles are reversed, "and it is Schlechter who attempts a Kingside attack –a maneuver doomed to failure according to Steinitz's teachings. Tchigorin, the bold resourceful fighter, shows that he can win a game scientifically, while Schlechter attempts to assume the discarded mantle of his adversary."

22 . . . N–B3
23 R–R4 PxP
24 PxP N–Q2
25 R–K1 N–B4
26 R–N4 N–Q6
27 R–K3 Q–B4
28 Q–B2

The pawn cannot be held. If 28 R(N4)–K4 R–K3 followed by . . . QR–K1.

28 . . . NxKP
29 NxN RxN
30 R(K3)–KN3 P–N4
31 P–KR4 K–N2
32 PxP PxP



Black now threatens . . . R–K8ch and . . . R–R1ch.

33 P–N4!

A last desperate try. If 33 . . . PxP e.p.?? 34 RxPch RxR 35 QxQ wins.

33 . . . R–K8ch
34 K–R2 R–R1ch
35 R–R3 RxRch
36 KxR Q–K4
37 P–N3 P–B3
38 Q–Q2 Q–K7
39 Q–Q7ch K–N3
Resigns

5.

The Age of Lasker

Chess became a professional enterprise in the age of Lasker. Before him there were some notable exceptions who devoted most of their time to the game; after him the number was legion. Lasker himself remained a professional most of his life; although he tried other things he always came back to chess.

Lasker's reign began in 1894, the year he defeated Steinitz, and lasted until 1921, the year he lost to Capablanca. In this period, the first twenty years of which were peaceful, the institution of the chess tournament was really developed. Now there were half a dozen international tournaments every year and innumerable local ones. Chess clubs sprang up in all the leading cities of the world. A thriving literature came into being, which has reached the point where it dwarfs the literature on all other games, both in quantity and quality. Chess became a vigorous international language—the period was a veritable Renaissance.

Steinitz hailed from Central Europe, and from his time on, chess supremacy passed to the German-speaking peoples and neighboring regions. The English, who had had so many eminent masters in the nineteenth century, could not produce a single man of Blackburne's stature in the twentieth. The only one who showed great promise, C. H. Alexander, was discouraged by the poor future that lay in store. Still the English retained their interest in the game and arranged many contests, including the first great tournament of modern times, Hastings, 1895. In France there were no chess masters of renown, and interest in the game itself had dwindled. In America there were many new clubs and much activity, but in spite of Morphy, Pillsbury, and Marshall, there were few masters of any consequence. Latin America was an unknown quantity until Capablanca burst upon the chess scene.

Emanuel Lasker

Of chessdom's immortals, Emanuel Lasker was by far the most versatile. His chess career was the most outstanding of all time; he made significant contributions to mathematics and philosophy; he wrote the best books available on the technique of games; and the list of his "minor" achievements, such as a book on unemployment and the invention of a forerunner of the tank, is almost endless.

What he did in chess is truly staggering. His exploits may be summed up in one sentence: For thirty years Lasker was the superman of the chess world. Marco exultantly spoke of him as "Lasker the unique"; Tartakower wonderingly called him "a piece of chess history."

His record is easy to recapitulate, for he played relatively little. But when he did play it was phenomenal.

Born in Berlinchen, near Berlin, on December 24, 1868, the son of Polish Jews, Emanuel learned the moves from his almost equally gifted brother Berthold at about the age of ten. While at the University of Berlin he picked up odd sums of money playing chess and cards at the cafés. In 1890 came an offer to go to England as a chess professional. Lasker snapped at the opportunity. In two years his game had so improved that he could trounce England's leading masters, including the brilliant Blackburne.

World Champion Steinitz was then living in New York. Lasker was glad of the chance to go to the New World in 1892. The tale was simple and brief: he came, he played, he won. In 1894 he defeated "Old Man" Steinitz for the title with almost ridiculous ease. At the age of twenty-six Lasker was the acknowledged king of chess.

From that time until his loss to Capablanca in 1921, Lasker scored a series of incredible victories. Any ordinary mortal would be happy to place third at Hastings, 1895, tie for second at Cambridge Springs, 1904, tie for first at St. Petersburg, 1909, draw in a match against Schlechter, 1910—but for Lasker these were the most serious "setbacks" of his career. On all other occasions, in all other tournaments and matches, he was first, first . . . more than first, one would have to say in some cases. At London in 1899 he outstripped the field by 4½ points; at St. Petersburg in 1914 he scored 7 points out of 8 against Capablanca, Alekhine, Marshall, and Tarrasch.

Whether Lasker should have lost to Capablanca in 1921 is a moot point which it is fruitless to discuss. The older generation must always give way to a younger group. The old masters are dethroned because they continue to play when their powers are waning. Morphy-Anderssen, Steinitz-Lasker, Lasker-Capablanca, Capablanca and Alekhine against the modern group, Botvinnik-Petrosian—all are incidents in the tragic tale of the decline of a chess champion's empire.

Even after Capablanca had won the championship, it took him fifteen years and four tries to come ahead of Lasker in tournament play. Lasker's sensational comback at New York in 1924, where he outdistanced the players of both the older and younger generation, is unparalleled. Most chess masters are unable to stand the physical strain of a tournament at fifty; to win first prize against the flower of the world's talent at fifty-five, as did Lasker, is an exploit that will probably never be duplicated.

In 1925 Lasker retired from active competition. In 1935, at the age of sixty-seven, he played through nineteen grueling rounds at Moscow and finished, without loss of a game, only half a point behind Flohr and Botvinnik, ahead of Capablanca. The papers rightly called it a biological miracle.

The last few years of his life, which ended in January 1941, were spent in exile in New York. Never did a word of bitterness or reproach cross his lips. His intellectual honesty and alertness were an inspiration never to be forgotten.

"Lasker occasionally loses a game, but he never loses his head," said the penetrating critic Tarrasch. Every great chess master must necessarily be gifted with an immense amount of innate chess ability; I have a feeling that the masters differ but little in this respect. What accounts for variations in achievement is a psychological factor—the attitude toward the game. Does the man want victory at chess more than anything else in life? That is the case with Alekhine, Reshevsky, and Fischer. Is he convinced that he has but to think about a chess position to generate marvelous moves? That was true of Capablanca. Is he a mathematician who believes that profound study can always find the solution? That held for Tarrasch, Euwe, and Botvinnik.

None of these things held for Lasker. The distinguishing characteristic of his mastery was an intuitive understanding of the human element. He looked upon the chess pieces as actors who, subject to certain conditions, were to be moved about by two playwrights. To him, chess was a dramatic conflict, a struggle between two human beings who agree upon certain rules. What really counted was the finished product, in which both competitors shared. That is why Lasker "never lost his head."

Lasker's dramatic insight helped to solve many a perplexing problem. Victory did not elate him unduly; defeat did not depress him disproportionately. He could make a mistake—and he made many mistakes—and smile, for he knew well that perfection is not granted to mortal man.

Lasker's games, ideas, books, and personality are a priceless heritage. In the conventional sense, he has founded no school. But in reality all chess players are his pupils. His games are an inexhaustible source of enjoyment and instruction. What they lack in superficial polish (for he was little addicted to brilliancies, though more than enough are to be found in his play) they make up in freshness and profundity. To me, many of his games are bottomless wells—I have been through them a dozen times and each time I have unearthed new ideas in them which I had not seen before.

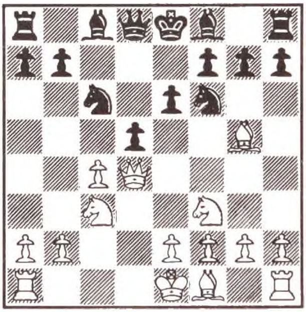
Of all the unplayed matches in chess history, none are more regrettable than Rubinstein-Lasker and Pillsbury-Lasker. Pillsbury and Lasker met a number of times in tournaments and produced immortal chess on almost every occasion. Here is one of Lasker's wins in the Quadrangular Tournament at St. Petersburg, 1895–96, one of his outstanding combinative efforts.

PILLSBURY LASKER

St. Petersburg, 1895–96

Queen's Gambit Declined

1	P–Q4	P–Q4
2	P–QB4	P–K3
3	N–QB3	N–KB3
4	N–B3	P–B4
5	B–N5	BPxP
6	QxP	N–B3



After this game Pillsbury subjected this variation to careful analysis and came to the conclusion that 7 BxN gives White the better game. He saved his "find" for eight years until he had a chance to play it against Lasker at Cambridge Springs in 1904.

7	Q–R4	B–K2
8	O–O–O	

Risky, but typical Pillsbury.

8	. . .	Q–R4
9	P–K3	B–Q2
10	K–N1	

To safeguard the RP and free the Knight.

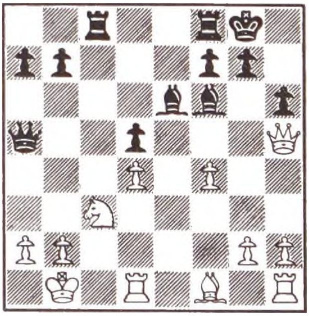
10	. . .	P–KR3!

Forcing a decision.

11	PxP	PxP
12	N–Q4	O–O!

Lasker always played logically regardless of the consequences. The sacrifice *13* BxP PxB *14* QxP fails against *14* . . . N–K4!.

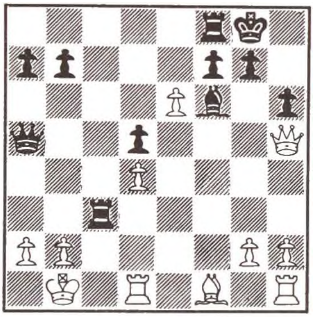
13	BxN	BxB
14	Q–R5	NxN
15	PxN	B–K3
16	P–B4	QR–B1



Black's superior development begins to create threats.

17 P–B5 RxN!!
18 PxB

If instead *18* PxR QxP with a crushing attack that forces White to give back the material gained.



18 . . . R–QR6!!!

The real point to the combination.

19 PxPch

The sacrifice is sound in all variations. If *19* PxR Q–N3ch *20* K–R1 BxPch *21* RxB QxRch *22* K–N1 PxP *23* B–K2 Q–K5ch *24* K any R–B7 and wins.

19 . . . RxP
20 PxR Q–N3ch
21 B–N5

Practically forced, for if *21* K–R1 BxPch, and if *21* K–B2 R–B2ch.

21 . . . QxBch
22 K–R1 R–B2

Threatening . . . R–B8ch! and . . . BxPch with mate to follow.

23 R–Q2 R–B5
24 R(R1)–Q1 R–B6
25 Q–B5 Q–B5!
26 K–N2

There was no defense. If *26* K–N1 RxP *27* Q–B2 R–B6 *28* Q–N2 P–QN4 wins.

26 . . . RxP!
27 Q–K6ch K–R2
28 KxR

If Q–B5ch, simply . . . K–R1.

28 . . . Q–B6ch
Resigns

Black mates in four: *29* K–R4 P–N4ch *30* KxP Q–B5ch *31* K–R5 B–Q1ch *32* Q–N6 BxQ mate.

Of all the threats to Lasker's supremacy, none was more serious than the youthful Capablanca, who became famous when he beat Marshall in a match in 1909 and won first prize at San Sebastian in 1911. Negotiations for a match between Lasker and Capablanca proved fruitless. It was not until 1914 that these two met in a tournament, at St. Petersburg. Capa led for quite a while, but he was finally overtaken by Lasker in a magnificent end spurt. The game in which Lasker defeated Capa is one of the landmarks of chess history; it was played in an atmosphere charged with suspense.

LASKER CAPABLANCA

St. Petersburg, 1914

Ruy Lopez

1 P–K4 P–K4
2 N–KB3 N–QB3
3 B–N5 P–QR3
4 BxN

In one of the most crucial games of his life, Lasker chooses this innocuous–but psychologically potent–variation; he had to win in order to gain first prize and overhaul Capa, who led by ½ point.

4 . . . QPxB
5 P–Q4 PxP
6 QxP QxQ
7 NxQ B–Q3

. . . B–Q2, in order to facilitate Queenside castling, is more accurate.

8 N–QB3 N–K2
9 O–O!

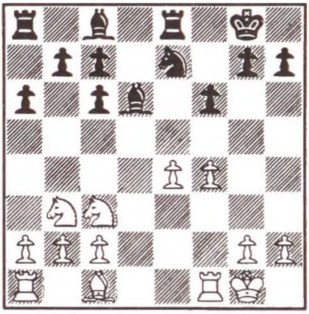
Beginning a war of nerves. Lasker knew that Capa and Alekhine had prepared a thorough analysis against the objectively better, but stereotyped O–O–O.

9 . . . O–O

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. It is fatuous to point out that O–O–O is stronger and more usual. What is significant is that this inaccuracy reveals that Capablanca has not mastered the psychological tension. In spite of his superb intuition, he fears a prepared variation.

10 P–B4 R–K1
11 N–N3 P–B3?

Correct is *11* . . . B–K3! e.g., *12* P–B5 BxN *13* RPxB B–K4 *14* B–B4 N–B1 or *12* P–K5 B–QN5 *13* N–K4 B–KB4 or *12* B–K3 BxN! *13* RPxB N–Q4! with complete equality in any case.



12 P–B5!

Lasker chooses a move which turned out to be Alekhine's undoing in their individual encounter. Capa never expected this striking tactical stroke, after which it is difficult to see a straight road to equality for Black.

12 . . . P–QN3

Correct is *12* . . . B–Q2 *13* B–B4 BxB *14* RxB P–QN3! *15* P–KN4 N–B1, and Black's counterplay against the White KP reduces White's plus to a minimum.

(Backward Pawn)

13 B–B4 B–N2

The alternative *13* . . . BxB *14* RxB P–B4 *15* R–Q1 B–N2 *16* R–B2 QR–Q1 *17* RxR RxR *18* R–Q2 RxR *19* NxR leaves White with a slight edge. (Lasker)

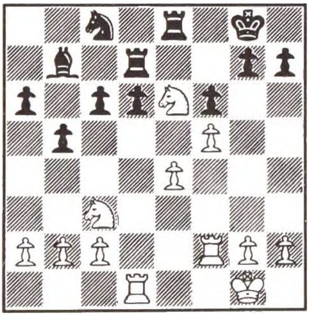
14 BxB!! PxB

Lasker has now worked out a complete winning method, which is simplicity itself: he will tie Black's pieces to the defense of the QP (that was impossible before the pawns were undoubled) and build up his K-side attack via P–KN4–5. He also hopes to plant a Knight on K6.

15 N–Q4 QR–Q1
16 N–K6 R–Q2
17 QR–Q1 N–B1

Patiently waiting, but . . . P–Q4 would have freed his game a bit.

18 R–B2 P–QN4



18 . . . RxN would be equivalent to an admission of defeat but would have created not inconsiderable technical difficulties. Black is now choked to death.

19 R(B2)–Q2 R(Q2)–K2
20 P–QN4 K–B2
21 P–QR3 B–R1

If *21* . . . N–N3 22 RxP N–B5 23 R–Q7, threatening the murderous N–Q8ch.

22 K–B2 R–R2
23 P–N4 P–R3
24 R–Q3 P–QR4
25 P–KR4 PxP
26 PxP R(R2)–K2
27 K–B3 R–N1
28 K–B4 P–N3

Else P–N5 would soon be crushing.

29 R–N3 P–N4ch
30 K–B3!

Not 30 PxP? RPxPch *31* K–B3 R–R1 with some counterplay.

30 . . . N–N3
31 PxP

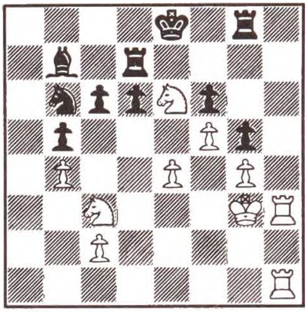
Not *31* RxP N–B5 32 R–Q4? N–K4ch followed by PxP with good prospects.

31 . . . RPxP
32 R–R3 R–Q2

The sacrifice of the exchange would have prolonged the game.

33 K–N3 K–K1
34 QR–KR1 B–N2

On . . . N–B5 35 R–R8 wins a piece. Black is helpless.



35 P–K5!! Clearance

Not the only, but certainly the most artistic, winning continuation.

35 . . .	QPxP

Good defensive moves are conspicuous by their absence: on 35 . . . P–Q4 36 PxP K–B2 37 N–B5 is murderous; while if 35 . . . BPxP 36 N–K4 N–Q4 37 R–R7! B–B1 38 R–R8 wins a piece to begin with.

36 N–K4	N–Q4
37 N(K6)–B5	B–B1
38 NxR	BxN
39 R–R7	R–B1

To free the Knight.

40 R–R1	K–Q1
41 R–R8ch	B–B1
42 N–B5	Resigns

After the New York Tournament of 1924, where he again won first prize, Lasker retired from active chess because he felt that the organization of the game was inimical to his best efforts as an artist. More than one master has had that feeling, though what Lasker was protesting against was really some suspicious financial dealings in the New York Tournament. He remained in retirement until 1934. The next year, at Moscow in 1935, he astonished the chess world by finishing third without the loss of a game. In his first round game against Kan we still catch a glimpse of the old Lasker.

KAN **LASKER**

Moscow, 1935

Queen's Gambit Declined

1	P–Q4	P–Q4
2	P–QB4	P–QB3
3	PxP	PxP
4	N–QB3	N–QB3
5	N–B3	N–B3
6	B–B4	B–B4

As always, Lasker is satisfied with simple openings.

7 Q–N3?

A faulty idea.

7	. . .	N–QR4
8	Q–R4ch	B–Q2
9	Q–B2	R–B1
10	P–K3	P–QN4!
11	P–QR3	P–K3
12	B–Q3	B–K2

Black has captured the initiative.

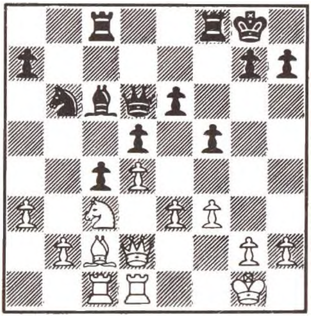
13	N–K5	N–B5
14	Q–K2	O–O

15 O–O B–K1
16 QR–B1 N–Q2!
17 NxN(B4) NPxN
18 B–N1 P–B4
19 P–B3 N–N3
20 B–B2

Preparing P–N3.

20 . . . B–Q3
21 BxB QxB
22 KR–Q1 B–Q2
23 Q–Q2 B–B3

Maneuvering for time.



24 R–K1 R(B1)–Q1
25 R–K2 R–Q2
26 R(B1)–K1 P–N3
27 R–Q1 R–N1
28 Q–K1 R(Q2)–QN2
29 R(Q1)–Q2 N–Q2
30 B–N1 P–K4!

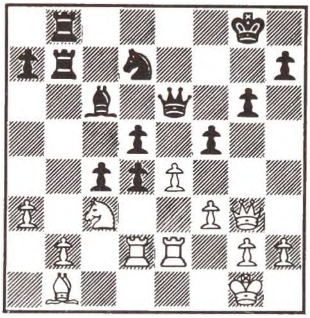
At last.

31 Q–N3 Q–K3?

A mistake; correct was 31 . . . Q–B3!.

32 P–K4! KPxP!?

Complications were always Lasker's forte.



33 PxBP?

Kan blunders also. The right way was 33 PxQP! Q–B3 34 PxB PxN 35 RxN RxP 36 RxR RxR 37 Q–K1! with an easy win. From now on Lasker regains his composure and finishes in wonderful style.

33 . . . Q–B3
34 R–K6 PxN!!

This is what Kan must have overlooked.

35 RxQ PxR
36 RxPch

The only chance. If 36 B–B2 NxR.

36 . . . PxR
37 QxPch K–B1
38 Q–Q6ch K–K1
39 B–B2

Threatening P–B6 as well as QxB.

39 . . . R–N3!
40 P–B6 K–Q1
41 P–B7 K–B1
42 P–B8=Qch NxQ
43 QxNch K–N2
44 Q–B6 K–R3!

Preparing . . . B–R5.

45 Q–Q6 R–K1

Preferable to 45 . . . B–R5 46 QxP.

46 P–KR4 R–K8ch
47 K–R2 R–QB8
48 B–B5

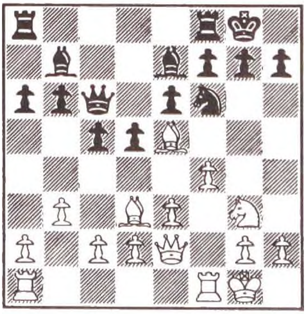
The last gasp.

48 . . . P–Q8=Q
49 B–B8ch K–R4
Resigns

For if 50 Q–B5ch K–R5! and he is checkless.

Here are a few more examples of Lasker's skill:

Bauer

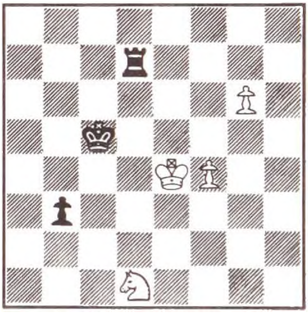


Lasker—TO PLAY

Amsterdam, 1889

1 N–R5 NxN
2 BxPch! KxB
3 QxNch K–N1
4 BxP! KxB
5 Q–N4ch K–R2
6 R–B3 P–K4
7 R–R3ch Q–R3
8 RxQch KxR
9 Q–Q7 and wins.

Edward Lasker



Emanuel Lasker—TO PLAY AND DRAW

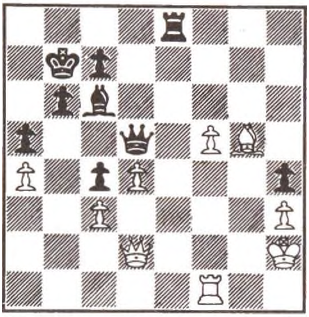
New York, 1924

1 N–N2 R–Q7
2 K–B3! R–Q1

Not . . . RxN 3 P–N7 R–B7ch! 4 KxR P–N7—draw.

3 K–K4 K–Q3
4 K–Q4 R–QB1
5 P–N7 K–K3
6 P–N8=Qch RxQ
7 K–B4 R–N6
8 N–R4 K–B4
9 K–N4 KxP
Drawn

Lasker—TO PLAY



Steinitz

Match, 1896–97

1 . . . R–KN1!!
Resigns

ZUGZWANG!!

1 The Bishop cannot move because of R–N7ch.

2 The Queen must remain at Q2 to defend the Bishop and the mate.

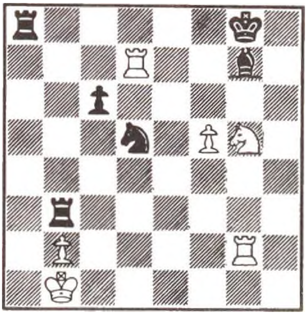
3 P–B6 allows . . . RxB.

4 K–N1 loses the Bishop.

5 If the Rook moves to any place except KN1, . . . QxBP wins.

The only move which remains is 2 R–KN1, which loses quickly after 2 . . . RxB! 3 QxR Q–Q3ch 4 R–N3 PxRch 5 QxP B–K1 6 P–R4 QxQch 7 KxQ P–N4!.

Lasker—TO PLAY



Alekhine

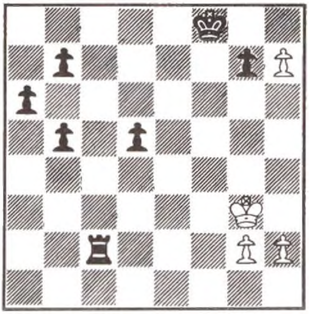
St. Petersburg, 1914

1 . . . R–Q6!!
2 RxN

Forced. White cannot meet the double threat of . . . N–B6ch or . . . R–Q8ch followed by N–K6ch. If 2 K–B1 R–R8ch 3 K–B2 N–N5 mate.

2 . . . RxR and wins

Lasker—TO PLAY



Amateur

London, 1914

The archwizard saves a lost game!

1 . . . R–B6ch
2 K–N4??

2 K–B2 R–B7ch 3 K–K3 R–B6ch 4 K–Q2 would have won.

2 . . . R–B5ch
3 K–N5 R–KR5!!
4 KxR P–N4ch!! and wins

Black plays K–N2 next, and queens his pawns first.

Siegbert Tarrasch

Tarrasch considered himself the strongest player in the world when Lasker came upon the scene; many who thought that Steinitz was passe agreed with him. In fact, when talk of a match between Lasker and Tarrasch first arose in 1895, Tarrasch declined, claiming that Lasker had yet to prove himself a great player! The long awaited match did not take place until 1908, when Tarrasch was no longer in his prime.

When Tarrasch died in 1934, Euwe wrote an appreciation for the *Magyar Sakkvilag*, the gist of which was: "He played many great games, he won many first prizes, he wrote many great books." We can add that Tarrasch was another of the select handful of geniuses who were of world championship caliber but did not secure the title because of an unkind fate.

Breslau, where he was born on March 5, 1862, had long been an important chess center, Anderssen above all was its pride, but Zukertort had lived there too, and many a minor master. Tarrasch liked to think that he had continued the splendid German tradition which had reached its high-water mark in Anderssen. Ironically, Tarrasch and Lasker, both Jews, were the last really great German masters. (Rub - Po[illegible])

In an autobiographical sketch, Tarrasch tells us nothing about his parents, but he does reveal, apologetically, that he was born with a club foot. Compensation for this physical handicap goes far to explain much of his character. As a boy he felt the urge to be at the top of his class all the time. Every bad mark—such as finishing second or third best—made him feel guilty; in later years he felt compelled to justify every bad move and every lost game.

An obviously gifted student, he completed his medical course at twenty-three. The rest of his life was divided between medical practice, abandoned only in old age, and chess, his real love.

At fifteen he learned the chess moves, and, as usual with great masters, progress was rapid. For several years nothing mattered but chess. It seemed that every chess master goes through a period in his adolescence when the sixty-four squares are more important than bread and butter. In Tarrasch's case, the total absorption in chess ended with a love affair. After that came university years with the customary rounds of wine, women, and song, though chess was by no means neglected. In 1885, when he obtained his degree, he was already a full-fledged master and made an extraordinary debut in the German Chess Association tournament by dividing second prize with a number of the world's best.

After the initial plunge, Tarrasch's career falls into three parts. In the first, from 1885 to 1894, after some hesitation he won almost everything in sight. After his victory at Manchester in 1890, he justly complained because the Germans merely referred to him as the champion of Germany; the English, on the other hand, placed him second to Steinitz, champion of the world, and proposed a match between the two. Certainly Tarrasch in 1890 was, if second at all, second only to Steinitz. It is a pity—a tragedy for Tarrasch—that he declined the invitation of the Havana Chess Club to meet Steinitz there in the winter of 1890–91. Had he accepted, he might well have won the title which he coveted afterward so vainly and so bitterly. The great opportunity knocked but once for Tarrasch, and he missed it. Very soon Lasker appeared, and Lasker was always Tarrasch's superior.

By 1894 the big four were Lasker, Steinitz, Tchigorin, and Tarrasch, and as yet there appeared to be little to choose among them. The next year Pillsbury joined the chosen few.

The second period of Tarrasch's life, from 1894 to 1908, was dominated by his rivalry with Lasker. All others had to bow, as he demonstrated most convincingly at Vienna in 1898 and Ostend in 1907 (where he had himself awarded the title of tournament champion of the world); even the younger generation could be kept off, as Marshall learned in 1905. But Lasker was immovable. And when the match finally came, in 1908, Tarrasch did not have a chance. Some great masters have discovered to their sorrow that there is one who is greater and have twisted it into tragedy.

From 1908 to his death in 1934, Tarrasch continued to play an active role in the chess world. But there were new stars in the firmament, new names on everybody's lips, especially after the First World War. His main influence then was exerted through his writings.

In chess literature Tarrasch occupies a unique position. *Praeceptor Germaniae* he was called when his articles and books first became known; later it was *praeceptor mundi*. And he undoubtedly was the teacher of the world. For more than a generation—roughly 1895 to 1925—he was the leading authority on chess. What Tarrasch said was law.

Yet, curiously, though he formulated the principles which dominated chess until they were shattered by the hypermoderns, all his works except the last were annotated tournament or match books.

Dreihundert Schachpartien is his masterpiece—a collection of 300 of his games, with detailed notes and a running autobiographical sketch first published in 1894. It is, indeed, one of the monuments of our game—up to the 1920s it was the best chess book ever written. The subtitle is "An unsystematic manual of chess for experienced players," and in the midst of his excellent notes he manages to intersperse all the basic principles which almost everybody tacitly accepted until 1914 and against which the generation of the hypermoderns rose in angry and somewhat uncritical revolt.

Morphy laid the basis for combination play by his demonstration of the value of development; Steinitz founded position play with his theory of the center. But it remained for Tarrasch to unite the two in one complete system (Morphy and Steinitz are really complementary). The pillars of this system are so familiar nowadays that it is hard to realize how bad master chess was before they were pointed out. Such everyday concepts as development, center, the two Bishops, pawn structure, attacking procedure, etc., were a complete mystery to all but a few before the days of Steinitz and Tarrasch.

By 1914 anybody who read books understood the principles of the open game, and they understood them either directly or indirectly because of Tarrasch's untiring efforts.

But unfortunately Tarrasch did not realize, at least in his writings, the limitations of his theory. "A cramped position bears the germs of loss," he pontificated, forgetting why and under what circumstances. The hypermoderns could reply with uncounted cases where cramped positions won instead of losing, but with an equally mistaken emphasis at the other extreme. The quarrel went on for many years, and Tarrasch did not help any by his assumption of infallibility. In most of his books the dogmatic air is so evident that we often feel they should have been entitled: "Thus Spake Tarraschustra." (Player or teacher

Because he was the dean of the chess world for thirty years Tarrasch's vices and virtues have been magnified out of all proportion. True, he was often petty, domineering, and vain; true, he frequently indulged his vindictive sense of humor with malice towards some—his club foot tells part of the story. To the generation which came after him his major fault was that he was uninspiring. He could criticize them, but he could not help them to build. As a result they built without him and against him, neglecting his real contributions.

Yet there is another side to the picture, as indeed there must be to explain his enormous influence. As a practicing grandmaster he was for thirty years one of the best three or four. But more important—throughout he preached the cause of chess. Tarrasch believed in chess, with a fiery conviction which too few of his colleagues have shared. He felt that chess was a significant pursuit, that it was our right and duty to spread its practice, that ability and improvement were ample reward for the time spent in serious study.

As his most fitting epitaph, we cannot do better than quote the famous sentence from his *The Game of Chess*: "Chess, like music, like love, has the power to make men happy."

Though his gospel was the attack, Tarrasch produced many defensive masterpieces. The following is one of his greatest, a battle royal from start to finish.

TCHIGORIN — TARRASCH

4th Match Game
St. Petersburg, 1893
French Defense

1 **P–K4** **P–K3**
2 **Q–K2** **P–QB4**
3 **P–KN3** **N–QB3**
4 **N–KB3**

P–KB4 is preferred nowadays. But Tchigorin's plan is to provoke . . . P–K4 and then break with P–KB4—amazingly modern!

4 **. . .** **B–K2**

4 . . . P–KN3, to control Q5, is more logical; but Tarrasch just develops normally and has confidence in the powers of his position.

5 **B–N2** **P–Q4**
6 **P–Q3** **N–B3**
7 **O–O** **O–O**
8 **N–B3** **P–QR3!**

Starting his Q-side counterattack.

9 **B–N5** **P–R3**
10 **B–B4** **P–QN4**
11 **KR–K1** **P–Q5**

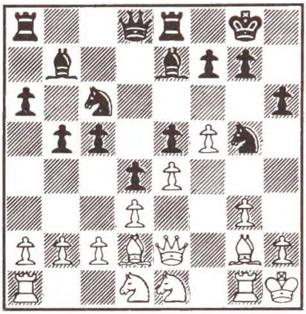
A courageous decision, even though it is a confession that he has been outmaneuvered. The alternative . . . B–N2 *12* PxP PxP *13* N–KR4! R–K1 *14* N–B5 B–KB1 *15* Q–Q2 RxRch *16* RxR B–B1 is tolerable, but *12* P–K5! creates a cramped position for Black where it would take a longer time to develop his counterattack.

12 **N–Q1** **N–Q2** Nfd7
13 **K–R1!** **R–K1**
14 **R–KN1**

P–K5 was worth a thought.

14 **. . .** **P–K4**
15 **B–Q2** **N–B1** Nf8
16 **N–K1** **N–K3** Ne6
17 **P–KB4** **B–N2**
18 **P–B5** **N–N4**

tarrasch & Rubinstein
built most of modern
theory before 1920



The problem for White–as Tchigorin most certainly realized –is how to advance his K-side pawns most effectively. Tarrasch tosses it off with a dogmatic shrug by recommending simply P–KR4, N–KB3, Q–B2, P–KN4, etc., when White's attack "could hardly have been stopped." Tchigorin should have chosen that method, but there is far more life in Black's position than Tarrasch is willing to admit. E.g., *19* P–KR4 N–KR2 *20* N–KB3 R–QB1 *21* Q–B2 P–B5 *22* P–KN4 PxP *23* PxP P–B3 *24* Q–N3 N–N5 with considerable counterplay.

19 N–B2 R–QB1
20 Q–R5 N–KR2!
21 N–B3 P–B5

Every move counts.

22 B–KB1

As Ben Franklin would have said, a clumsy woman can cramp anybody's style. White's Queen at R5 is out of play and prevents the direct pawn advance. E.g., on 22 N–N4, B–B1! holds everything.

22 . . . PxP

First blood!

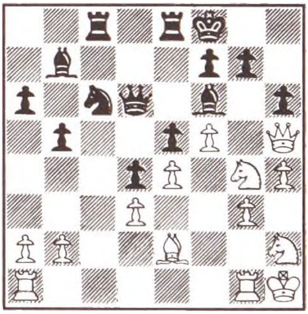
23 PxP N–N4!
24 BxN BxB
25 N–N4

Threatening P–KR4.

25 . . . K–B1!!!

A stroke of genius. The King cannot be defended well where he is; so he is moved out of the way.

26 B–K2 B–B3
27 P–KR4 Q–Q3
28 N(B3)–R2



28 . . . N–K2!!

Another magnificent idea. The N retreats to N1 to hold back the enemy BP. If now 29 NxB QxN 30 N–N4? QxBP!.

29 QR–KB1

Not 29 NxRP PxN 30 QxRPch K–N1 31 QR–KB1 R–B3! and Black is safe.

29 . . . N–N1!
30 B–Q1 R–B2
31 B–N3 R(K1)–B1
32 N–B2 B–Q1!

Creating more delay, since 33 P–KN4?? allows . . . N–B3 winning the Queen.

33 Q–K2 P–QR4
34 N–B3 P–R5
35 B–Q1 B–QB3!

Of this move Tarrasch writes: "The beginning of a fine maneuver which makes it possible for the Rooks to penetrate to the seventh rank." We fully agree.

36 P–KN4 P–B3
37 N–R3 B–K1
38 Q–R2 B–B2
39 P–R3 B–N6
40 N–B2 BxB
41 NxB R–B7
42 Q–N3

Better was R–B2, but he is intent on the attack. And it seems that Black finally is unable to prevent P–N5. Another crisis is at hand.

42 . . . P–N5!
43 PxP Q–R3!!

The point.

44 N–B2 RxP
45 P–KN5

At last!

45 . . . RPxP
46 PxP R(B1)–B7
47 N–N4 Q–Q3
48 PxP?

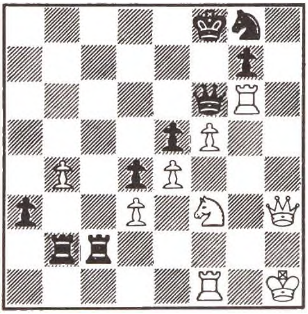
48 Q–R3! would have won; e.g., . . . Q–B2 49 Q–R8! Q–B2 50 R–R1!! RxP 51 PxP PxP 52 N–R4! R(N5)–N7 (otherwise N–R6) 53 RxP and Black is helpless against the countless openings on all sides.

In over-the-board play, however, it was extremely difficult to realize that the text, which wins the Black Queen, could be adequately countered by the advance of the QRP.

48 . . . BxP
49 Q–R3 P–R6!!

Another stroke of genius: the only defense is to ignore White's attack! On 49 . . . Q–B2 50 Q–R8, transposing into some of the above variations, is too strong.

50 NxB QxN
51 R–N6



Once more Tarrasch appears to be on the brink of disaster.

51 . . . P–R7!!!

And once more he escapes, this time permanently.

52 RxQch?

Tarrasch's suggestion 52 N–N5 would have drawn: 52 . . . K–K2 (forced, since he cannot afford to give up the Queen for a Knight) 53 RxQ PxR 54 Q–R7ch K–Q3 55 N–B7ch K–B3 56 QxN! R–N8!, and now 57 NxPch! PxN 58 Q–Q5ch is the clearest; the remarkable feature is that White with Q and N for a R can lose quite easily if he tries too hard to win.

52 . . .	PxR
53 R–Q1	

Q–N3 or R–KN1 is no better.

53 . . .	R–N8
54 Q–B1	R(B7)–QN7
55 N–Q2	RxR
56 QxR	RxN!
57 Q–QB1	RxP
58 K–N2	R–QB6
59 Q–QR1	R–B7ch
60 K–B3	P–Q6
61 Q–Q1	

Or *61* K–K3 P–Q7 62 K–K2 R–B8.

61 . . .	R–QN7
62 Q–R4	P–Q7

To be followed by . . . R–N8. White Resigns. An epic struggle.

Tarrasch always developed a logical formation. Here is a classic example from one of his great tournament victories:

TARRASCH	MARCO

Vienna, 1898
Petroff's Defense

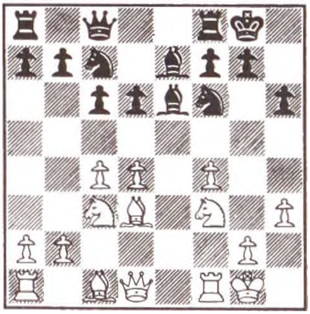
1 P–K4	P–K4
2 N–KB3	N–KB3
3 NxP	P–Q3
4 N–KB3	NxP
5 P–Q4	B–K2
6 B–Q3	N–KB3
7 O–O	O–O
8 P–KR3	B–K3
9 P–B4!	

The restricting maneuvers have begun.

9 . . .	P–B3
10 N–N5!	N–R3

Black cannot develop normally.

11 N–QB3	N–B2
12 P–B4	P–KR3
13 N–B3	Q–B1



14 Q–B2	R–N1
15 P–KB5	B–Q2
16 B–B4	P–QN4
17 P–QN3	P–B4!?

Sacrificing a pawn to free himself.

18 P–Q5!

With 18 PxBP QPxP 19 PxP he wins a pawn, but keeping Black cramped is by far more important.

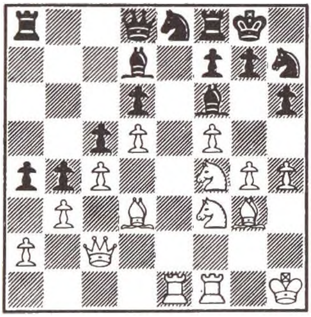
18 . . .	P–N5
19 N–K2	P–QR4
20 P–N4	N–R2
21 P–KR4	

Intending P–N5.

21 . . .	Q–Q1
22 B–N3	P–R5
23 K–R1	R–R1
24 QR–K1!	

Exchanges must be avoided.

24 . . .	N–K1
25 N–B4	B–KB3



26 N–K6!!

In such positions some sacrifice is bound to prove decisive. If in reply 26 . . . PxN 27 BPxP B–B1 28 BxNch wins.

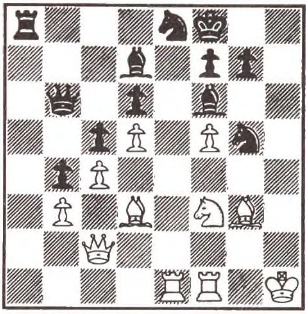
26 . . .	PxP
27 PxP	Q–N3

Hoping for a stalemate.

28 NxR	KxN
29 P–N5!	

Anyhow.

29 . . .	PxP
30 PxP	NxP



31 Q–KR2!	K–N1
32 NxN	BxN
33 P–B6!	P–N3
34 BxNP!	Resigns

For if 34 . . . PxB 35 P–B7ch.

Tarrasch was noted for his handling of the two Bishops. Here is a striking illustration from one of his later tournaments:

SPIELMANN **TARRASCH**

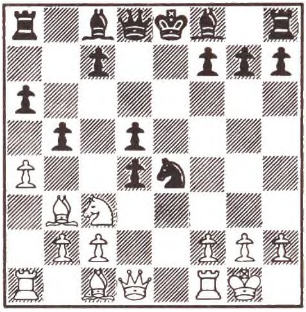
San Sebastian, 1912

Ruy Lopez

1 P–K4	P–K4
2 N–KB3	N–QB3
3 B–N5	P–QR3
4 B–R4	N–B3
5 O–O	NxP
6 P–Q4	P–QN4
7 B–N3	P–Q4
8 P–QR4	

Now out of date, partly as a result of this game.

8 . . . NxQP!
9 NxN PxN
10 N–B3!?



10 . . . NxN!

The simplest.

11 PxN P–QB4!

The primary purpose is to closet the White Bishop.

12 RPxP B–K2
13 Q–B3?

Tarrasch recommends *13* BPxP P–B5 *14* B–R4 O–O *15* PxP RxP *16* P–QB3.

13 . . . B–K3
14 RxP O–O!
15 PxP P–B5
16 B–R2

If *16* B–R4 Q–Q2! wins a piece!

16 . . . RxR
17 PxR Q–R4
18 B–N1 P–B6!

Now the Bishop is completely immobilized.

19 Q–N3 R–B1
20 P–B4 B–KB4
21 R–K1 B–B3
22 K–R1 P–R3

Not *22* . . . QxP? at once because of *23* QxP!, and if *23* . . . RxQ *24* R–K8 mate.

23 P–R3 R–N1
24 B–K3 QxP

The threat is . . . Q–R8.

25 R–Q1 Q–R8
26 Q–K1 B–K5
27 K–R2 B–K2
28 Q–B1 P–B4

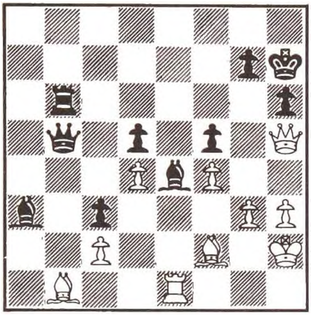
As a result of the last ten moves, both of White's Bishops are desolate behind a wall of pawns.

29 R–K1 B–R5
30 P–N3 B–K2
31 B–B2 B–Q3
32 R–B1 K–R2

White is reduced to marking time; Black prepares the breakthrough at his leisure.

33 R–K1 R–N3
34 R–B1 B–R6
35 R–K1 Q–N7
36 Q–K2 R–N5
37 R–N1 R–N3
38 R–K1 Q–N4!
39 Q–R5

If *39* Q–Q1 P–N4 does the trick.

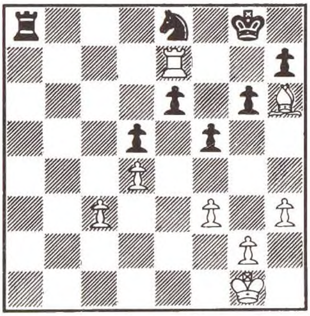


39 . . . QxB!!
40 RxQ RxR
41 P–N4 B–B8!!

White Resigns. A remarkable finish. If 42 K–N3 P–N3! 43 Q–R4 BxPch! 44 KxB P–N4ch.

Here are some brilliant excerpts from Tarrasch's games:

Reti



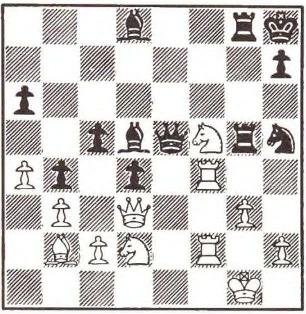
Tarrasch—TO PLAY

Vienna, 1922

1 K–R2! N–Q3
2 R–N7ch K–R1
3 R–Q7! N–N4
4 K–N3 NxBP
5 K–B4 N–N4
6 K–K5 R–K1
7 K–B6 Resigns

An amazing position!

Walbrodt

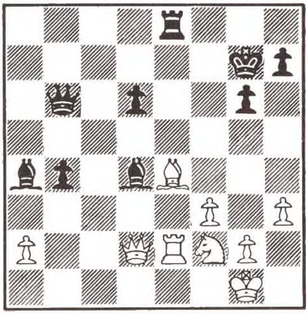


Tarrasch—TO PLAY

Hastings, 1895

1 RxP!! NxP
2 NxN! RxNch
3 PxR RxPch
4 K–B1! RxQ
5 R–N4!!! Resigns

Tarrasch—TO PLAY



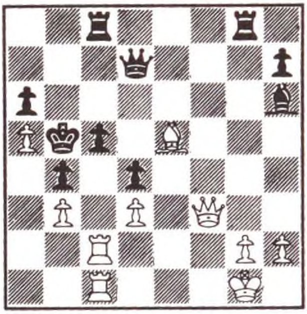
Harmonist

Nuremberg, 1892

1 . . . B–N4
Resigns

If 35 B–Q3 RxR wins a piece. If 35 R–K1 P–Q4 36 B moves BxNch 37 QxB RxRch, etc.

Allies



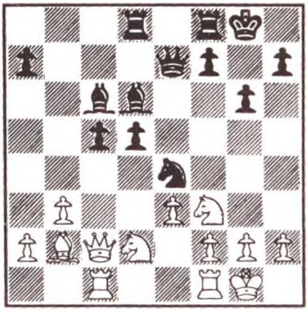
Tarrasch—TO PLAY

Naples, 1914

1 B–B7!!!	QxB
2 RxPch	QxR
3 Q–N7ch	KxP
4 R–R1 mate	

Magnificent!

Tarrasch—TO PLAY



Nimzovich

St. Petersburg, 1914

1 . . .	NxN
2 NxN	P–Q5
3 PxP	BxPch!
4 KxB	Q–R5ch
5 K–N1	BxP
6 P–B3	KR–K1
7 N–K4	Q–R8ch
8 K–B2	BxR
9 P–Q5	P–B4
10 Q–B3	Q–N7ch
11 K–K3	RxNch
12 PxR	P–B5ch
13 KxP	R–B1ch
14 K–K5	Q–R7ch
15 K–K6	R–K1ch
16 K–Q7	B–N4 mate

Harry Nelson Pillsbury

Harry Nelson Pillsbury was one of the vital forces in chess history. Despite a tragically brief career, he became one of the monumental figures in the game, a towering and distinctive personality.

The Boston near which he was born on December 5, 1872 was just beginning to cede its cultural pre-eminence to New York; Pillsbury's development reflected the change. There is no record of exactly how he became interested in chess, but we do know that he learned the moves at the age of sixteen. His early surroundings were those of a typical middle-class American family. Evidently chess genius can occur in any environment.

At first Pillsbury's progress was unusual, but none too startling. He moved to Boston, became a confirmed denizen of all the chess clubs, met the strongest players, and improved rapidly. By 1892 he was the best in Boston and—more important—had discovered his place in life. Earlier thoughts of a commercial career were discarded; all his time was devoted to chess, checkers, and whist, with chess gradually crowding out the other two.

In 1893 his professional career was already started; successes against the Germans Walbrodt and Schottlaender, then on a visit to Boston, were an auspicious beginning. 1894 saw him in New York where, as always, the best American and foreign talent was concentrated. World champion Lasker and ex-champion Steinitz, who was Pillsbury's ideal, were there, as well as Hodges, Showalter, Delmar, Albin, and others less well known. In the tournaments of the next two years, Pillsbury ranked about on a par with the top American masters, all of whom, however, were far inferior to Lasker and Steinitz.

Then, in 1895, came the turning point. The Hastings Chess Club of Hastings, England, organized the most important international tournament held up to that time, with every one of the great masters of the period, and many who were to become great later, present. Lasker, Steinitz, Tarrasch, and Tchigorin were the favorites. Pillsbury had as yet done nothing to warrant blind faith; yet, to everybody's amazement, he captured first prize. It was the most sensational event since Morphy's triumphal tour.

After Hastings, it was clear that the world's five leading grandmasters (though the term was not then in common use) were Lasker, Steinitz, Tchigorin, Tarrasch, and Pillsbury, with little to choose among them. It was not until St. Petersburg, at the end of 1895, and Nuremburg, in the summer of 1896, that Lasker demonstrated his superiority over the other four.

In succeeding tournaments, Pillsbury was always a high-prize winner, but he could never repeat his performance at Hastings. Down to Paris, 1900, he was always second or third; after that, lesser lights managed to pass him by with increasing frequency. Poor health was most obviously the reason. At Cambridge Springs in 1904, he was little more than a shadow; two years later he died.

In the five years, from 1895 to 1900, when Pillsbury was at the height of his powers, he was certainly the equal of anyone. Against Lasker he always did well in individual encounters; so well, indeed, that the chances

1872-1906
= 34

would have been even if a match had been arranged between the two in that period. Pillsbury was not so well rounded as Lasker, but there are some respects in which he was greater. Pillsbury's stature in history is that of a world champion; he never had a chance to play for the title because of the way in which chess was organized.

His games reveal a tempestuous genius whose disappointments failed to produce sufficient subtlety. An incredible combinative gift was his great strength: impatience, especially in inferior positions, was his weakness. In a sense his chess and his career fall into similar patterns. He begins with the violence of a tornado; often the resistance is swept away in a blaze of brilliance—there he is at his grandest. But at other times the going is much more strenuous; then, where sheer force will not do, he frequently collapses. For Pillsbury it was always all or nothing.

His genius is expressed in the originality and bold sweep of his attacking ideas. Both the Queen's Gambit and the Ruy Lopez, the two major defensive weapons of the modern master, first became popular chiefly because of the treatment which Pillsbury gave them. In the middlegame, where direct methods were applicable, he was incomparable. But where maneuvering—tacking to take advantage of the winds—was needed, he was less successful. In many endgames he did not feel at home. By and large, however, his collection of games is one of the finest; the only reason some others are better is that Pillsbury's covered too short a time.

Pillsbury was one of the few great masters who were satisfied with the choice of chess as a profession. In exhibitions and tournaments he enjoyed himself immensely without any of the soul-torturing which has bothered others. Because he was such a marvelous entertainer, he was always a welcome guest. His blindfold powers and miraculous memory were a delight to behold. For quality of performance, his blindfold display against twenty-two participants in the *Hauptturnier* (just below master class) at Hanover, 1902, is still unequaled. One of his favorite displays was to conduct a number of chess and checker games (he ranked among the twenty best checker experts in the United States) blindfold and play whist at the same time. To make it easier, he would sometimes ask somebody in the audience to give him a list of thirty words which he repeated backwards when he was all through. His exhibitions were so impressive that the memories which they left are still vivid today, despite a lapse of forty years. As an exhibitor, Pillsbury has never had a peer.

The first successes of a new star always have a dramatic quality. It is as though a living picture were unfolding, depicting the change of the old order to the new. And when these initial triumphs are scored by defeating favorites, as in Pillsbury's case, artistic chess of the highest rank is produced.

In the first two rounds of the Hastings tournament in 1895, Pillsbury was paired with two of the greatest, Tchigorin and Tarrasch. Against Tchigorin he showed his mettle in a long, involved King's Gambit Declined, where he avoided a safe draw in order to retain some winning chances, disregarding the risks involved, and finally lost. Sometimes a young master who begins with a defeat changes his style, fearful that he will collapse completely. But Pillsbury was not depressed by losses. With limitless confidence in his own powers, he adopted exactly the same tactics—all out to win—against Tarrasch. The result is superb.

PILLSBURY **TARRASCH**

Hastings, 1895

Queen's Gambit Declined

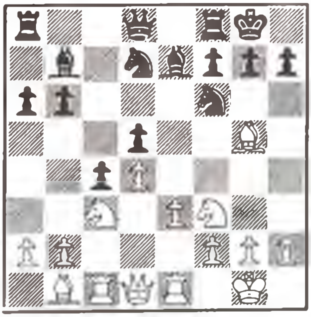
1 P–Q4 P–Q4
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 N–QB3 N–KB3
4 B–N5

Relatively new at the time; B–B4 was then more usual.

4 . . . B–K2
5 N–B3 QN–Q2
6 R–B1 O–O
7 P–K3 P–QN3
8 PxP PxP
9 B–Q3 B–N2
10 O–O P–B4
11 R–K1

A waste of time.

11 . . . P–B5
12 B–N1 P–QR3



13 N–K5!

The innovation which put the Q's Gambit on the chess master's map.

13 . . . P–N4
14 P–B4 R–K1
15 Q–B3 N–B1
16 N–K2! N–K5
17 BxB RxB
18 BxN PxB
19 Q–N3! P–B3

Otherwise P–B5–B6.

20 N–N4 K–R1
21 P–B5!

Again we are apt to miss the originality of Pillsbury's moves. But in 1895 only a select handful of great masters grasped the correct principles of position play.

21 . . . Q–Q2

Better was an immediate Q-side advance.

22 R–B1! R–Q1

More hesitation . . .

23 R–B4 Q–Q3

. . . still unable to take his bearings . . .

24 Q–R4!

Threatening N–B2, N–N3, etc.

24 . . . R(Q1)–K1
25 N–B3?

Correct is 25 N–B2, and if . . . B–Q4 26 P–KN4 P–R3 27 Q–N3 P–N5 28 P–KR4 N–R2 29 N–R3 R–QB1—White has the initiative, Black the counterplay. After the text move, however, Black gets the better of it.

25 . . . B–Q4
26 N–B2 Q–B3
27 R–B1 P–N5
28 N–K2 Q–R5

Or 28 . . . P–B6 29 P–QN3.

29 N–N4! N–Q2

Not . . . QxP?? 30 NxP! and wins.

30 R(B4)–B2! K–N1

If 30 . . . QxP 31 N–B4 B–B2 32 N–N6ch BxN 33 PxB P–R3 34 NxRP!! PxN 35 QxRPch K–N1 36 R–B5! wins.

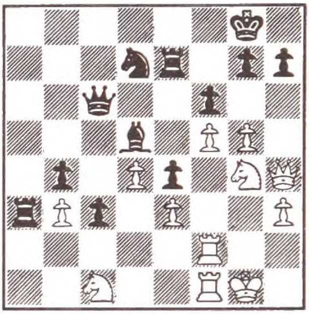
31 N–B1 P–B6
32 P–QN3 Q–B3
33 P–KR3 P–QR4
34 N–R2 P–R5
35 P–N4 PxP
36 PxP R–R1?

36 . . . P–R3 maintains the advantage. E.g., 37 Q–N3 N–B1! 38 P–R4 N–R2, and White must regroup for the advance.

37 P–N5!

From here to the end Pillsbury's play is perfection.

37 . . . R–R6
38 N–N4



38 . . . BxP

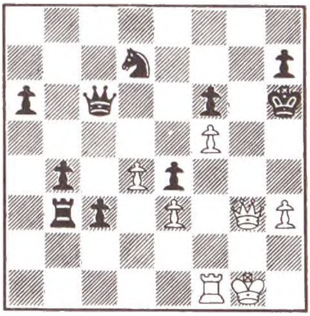
Allowing a beautiful conclusion.

39 R–KN2! K–R1
40 PxP PxP

40 . . . NxP 41 N–K5 is no improvement.

41 NxB RxN
42 N–R6! R–N2
43 RxR! KxR
44 Q–N3ch!! KxN

44 . . . K–B1 45 Q–N8ch costs a Rook.



45 K–R1!!!

The enchanting key. Black is helpless against the threatened R–KN1.

45	. . .	Q–Q4
46	R–KN1	QxBP

The remainder is more to be pitied than criticized.

47	Q–R4ch	Q–R4
48	Q–B4ch	Q–N4
49	RxQ	PxR
50	Q–Q6ch	K–R4
51	QxN	P–B7
52	QxP mate	

A splendid battle.

Following are two startling wins against Emanuel Lasker–two of the finest games of Pillsbury's short-lived career.

PILLSBURY **LASKER**

Nuremberg, 1896

French Defense

(*Best Played Game Prize*)

1	P–K4	P–K3
2	P–Q4	P–Q4
3	N–QB3	N–KB3
4	P–K5	KN–Q2
5	P–B4	P–QB4
6	PxP	N–QB3
7	P–QR3	NxBP
8	P–QN4	N–Q2
9	B–Q3	P–QR4

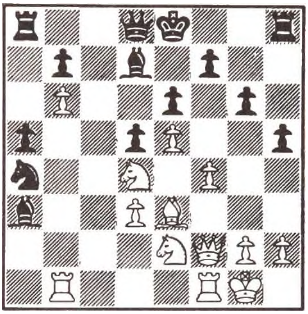
Amazingly modern.

10	P–N5	QN–N1
11	N–B3	N–B4
12	B–K3	QN–Q2
13	O–O	P–KN3
14	N–K2	B–K2
15	Q–K1	N–N3
16	KN–Q4	B–Q2
17	Q–B2	N(N3)–R5
18	QR–N1	P–R4

Not . . . O–O 19 P–N4.

19	P–N6!	NxB
20	PxN	BxP

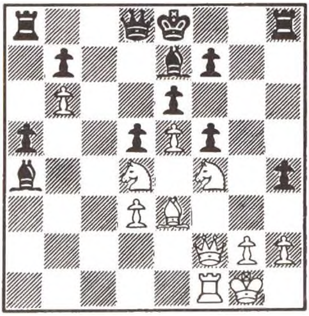
Now comes the rock crusher . . .



21	P–B5!!	NPxP
22	N–B4	P–R5
23	R–R1	

23 NxBP PxN 24 NxP leads to a vicious attack but is inferior to the text.

23	. . .	B–K2
24	RxN!	BxR



25 N(B4)xKP!

The point!

25 . . .	**PxN**
26 NxKP	**B–Q2**

There was no defense. E.g., if 26 . . . Q–B1 27 QxBP Q–B3 28 B–N5 QxPch 29 P–Q4 Q–N5 30 Q–B7ch K–Q2 31 BxB QxB 32 N–B5ch K–Q1 33 NxPch K–Q2 34 N–B5ch K–Q1 35 QxPch K–B2 36 Q–N7ch followed by QxRch and wins.

27 NxQ	**RxN**

The rest is anticlimactic.

28 B–B5	R–QB1
29 BxB	KxB
30 Q–K3	R–B3
31 Q–N5ch	K–B2
32 R–B1	RxRch
33 QxR	R–QB1
34 Q–K1	P–R6
35 PxP	R–N1ch
36 K–B2	P–R5
37 Q–N4	R–N3
38 K–B3	P–R6
39 QxP	RxP
40 Q–B5	R–K3
41 Q–B7	K–K2
42 K–B4	P–N3
43 P–R4	R–QB3
44 Q–N8	B–K1
45 KxP	R–R3
46 Q–B7ch	K–B1
47 Q–Q8	P–N4
48 P–K6	R–R2
49 K–K5	P–N5
50 Q–Q6ch	Resigns

Pillsbury had waited eight years for the revenge that was now his. It proved to be the last flickering of his genius, and the final encounter.

PILLSBURY LASKER

Cambridge Springs, 1904

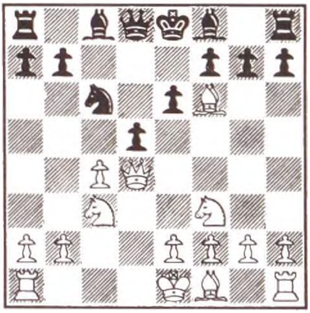
Queen's Gambit Declined

1 P–Q4	P–Q4
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 N–QB3	N–KB3
4 N–B3	P–B4
5 B–N5	BPxP
6 QxP	N–B3

Better was . . . B–K2 followed by . . . N–B3.

7 BxN!

The "find" which Pillsbury had saved for eight years, ever since Lasker beat him at St. Petersburg, 1895–96. For the game, see the section on Lasker.



7 . . .	**PxB**

If 7 . . . NxQ 8 BxQ N–B7ch 9 K–Q2 KxB 10 KxN PxP 11 R–Q1ch, and White should win.

8 Q–R4	**PxP**

If . . . P–Q5 9 O–O–O P–K4 *10* P–K3 B–QB4 *11* PxP PxP *12* N–Q5!.

9 R–Q1 B–Q2
10 P–K3 N–K4

Loss of time. Better was B–K2.

11 NxN PxN
12 QxBP Q–N3
13 B–K2! QxNP

Lasker wrongly accepts the challenge. Better was simply . . . B–B3.

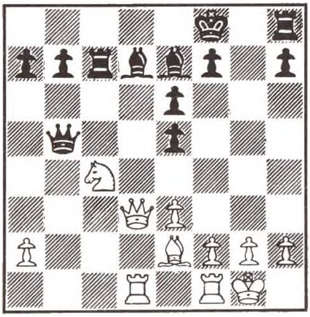
14 O–O R–B1
15 Q–Q3 R–B2

Still B–B3 was preferable.

16 N–K4 B–K2
17 N–Q6ch K–B1

Not . . . BxN *18* QxB Q–B6 *19* B–N5! winning immediately.

18 N–B4 Q–N4



19 P–B4!!

A splendid conception. White just wants to get at the King.

19 . . . PxP?

Lasker stumbles in a bad position. P–K5 was essential—good or bad—for Black must keep the KB-file closed.

20 Q–Q4 P–B3

Or . . . R–N1? *21* QxBP.

21 QxBP Q–QB4
22 N–K5 B–K1
23 N–N4 P–B4
24 Q–R6ch K–B2
25 B–B4! R–B3
26 RxPch! QxR
27 R–KB1

Black gets two Rooks for the Queen, but his position is too open.

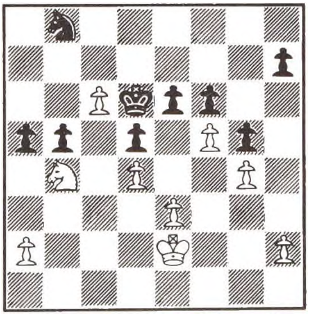
27 . . . QxRch
28 KxQ B–Q2
29 Q–R5ch!

Better than N–K5ch.

29 . . . K–N1
30 N–K5 Resigns

Here are some more glimpses of Pillsbury at his best.

Gunsberg



Pillsbury—TO PLAY

Hastings, 1895

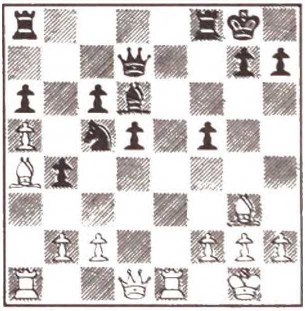
The endgame which clinched first prize for Pillsbury!

1	PxP!	NxP

Not . . . PxN 2 P–K7 KxP 3 P–B7.

2	NxN	KxN
3	P–K4!!	PxP
4	P–Q5ch	K–Q3
5	K–K3	P–N5
6	KxP	P–R5
7	K–Q4	P–R4
8	PxP	P–R6
9	K–B4	P–B4
10	P–R6	P–B5
11	P–R7	Resigns

Tarrasch

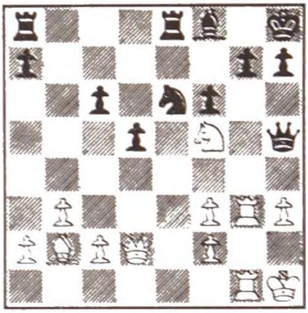


Pillsbury—TO PLAY

Vienna, 1898—second game of the tie match

1	QxPch!	PxQ
2	BxQ	BxB
3	B–B6!	B–Q3
4	BxPch	K–R1
5	BxR and wins easily	

Lasker



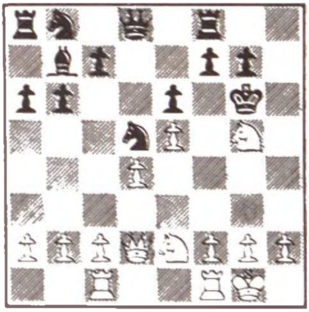
Pillsbury—TO PLAY

London, 1899

1	Q–R6!!	QxN
2	BxP	R–K2
3	BxR	BxB
4	RxP	QxBPch
5	R(N1)–N2	Q–Q8ch

Drawn!

Judd



Pillsbury—TO PLAY

St. Louis, 1899

1	Q–Q3ch!	KxN
2	P–B4ch	K–R3
3	Q–R3ch	K–N3
4	P–B5ch	PxP
5	RxP!	R–R1
6	Q–N4ch	K–R2
7	RxP	Resigns

Akiba Rubinstein

Akiba Rubinstein is the great endgame artist of chess history. There are many remarkable achievements by other masters, but by and large, for accuracy, profundity, and sheer beauty, Rubinstein's endgames have never been equaled.

At an early age, he came to exist for chess. Born in Stawiski, in Russian Poland, on December 12, 1882, he was brought up in the strict classical Hebrew tradition, slated to study, meditate, perhaps add some new subtleties to the complexities of the Talmud. The form of his life indeed remained true to the pattern set up, completely divorced from everyday cares, dedicated in toto to an all-devouring discipline. But instead of the Holy Books, chess soon came to fill his mind day and night. At the age of sixteen he learned the moves—the relatively late date was probably a handicap. With typical Talmudic contempt for mundane considerations, he plunged into the game, immediately. He had found his metier and was never to leave it again.

As is always the case with chess geniuses, improvement was rapid. He had not been playing for more than four or five years when he won a match from Salve, a true coffeehouse champion, but a first-class expert nonetheless. Then to Barmen, in 1905, where he was officially awarded the title of master, according to the well-ordered German scheme.

Lasker was then champion; Tarrasch and the other members of the older guard—Maroczy, Burn, Janowsky—were dominant. Of the younger generation only Marshall had broken into the ranks. But no sooner had Rubinstein earned the right to take part in international tournaments than he began his march to the top. At Ostend, 1905, third; Ostend, 1906, second. Then came the greatest victories of all—first at Carlsbad, 1907, with everybody there except Lasker, the win from Marshall in the equivalent of a match at Lodz in 1908, finally a tie with Lasker for first at St. Petersburg, 1909. To cap it all, he won their individual encounter, an immortal masterpiece. Rubinstein was freely spoken of as the next champion.

Had Rubinstein played a match with Lasker in 1910, instead of Schlechter, he might well have realized the ambition of his life. But the poor Jewish boy from a Polish ghetto had little backing in his own country, and none in any other. No clubs or individuals—as with Alekhine—were so enthused by his genius that they offered to support him. There was nothing to do but continue until a lucky break came along. Instead, fate produced Capablanca.

After San Sebastian, 1911, when the Cuban star nosed him out, Rubinstein was still always near the top of the world's masters, but he never again regained the esteem he had enjoyed in 1909. True, in 1912 he scored no fewer than five first prizes in international tournaments. But neither Capa nor Lasker took part in any of them—and they were his only superiors. Then the serious setback at St. Petersburg in 1914, where he could not even make the finals, the war, four years of nonproductive starvation, and Rubinstein was no longer one of the select handful of world championship candidates. Before his retirement in 1932, he gathered in countless first prizes, played numbers of great games, but the Lasker-Capablanca-Alekhine trio, not to mention Reti, Nimzovich, and many others, always outshone him.

Slowly a tragic persecution complex engulfed his mind. After 1932 serious chess was impossible, though he did play odd games with intimate friends. In 1940, when the *Boches* invaded Belgium, Rubinstein, in Antwerp, was thought to be one of their victims. Strangely, he escaped the Nazi murderers by finding refuge in a mental hospital. But he never returned to serious chess and died a few years after World War II.

We are filled with a sense of the tragic when we review Rubinstein's career. Here is a man who might have been champion (though Lasker was certainly a greater master) but was never given the chance. More important, in so many of his games we are carried away by their classic perfection and feel impelled to say: Better chess cannot be played by mortal man. And yet first prizes, later even third and fourth prizes, escaped him all too often. The tragedy of Rubinstein arose because he played too much beautiful chess and too little winning chess.

The difference between winning and beautiful chess is appreciated only when we look at the game in the right light, when we compare it with other occupations, serious and recreative. And that Rubinstein was unable to do. His incredibly intense absorption in chess, to the exclusion of all else, reveals that he was driven by a burning ambition which could not be realized precisely because it was so all-consuming. Paradoxically, to give the best that he has, the chess master must step to one side in order to see himself and the game in the proper perspective.

!?

Personally, Rubinstein was the simplest of souls. Silence was his rule. Even in chess he said little. When the famous Swedish *Laerobok* was being written right after the last war, the sponsor, Collijn, heard that Rubinstein had a copy of the German *Handbuch*, with various marginal comments. Collijn bought the book for a fantastic price, about $1,000, but Rubinstein's "notes" did not cover two pages when they were put together. During the 1928 Bad Kissingen tournament Tartakower wittily remarked one day that he had just sent his one millionth telegram, while Rubinstein had just uttered his tenth word in two weeks.

All his passion, all his love, were given over to chess. And his games are things of beauty that will last forever. Rubinstein variations have enriched countless openings, most notable being the refutation of the Tarrasch Defense and the aggressive reply which virtually killed the Four Knights as a tournament weapon.

The middlegame was Rubinstein's Achilles' hell. Naturally he could conduct both attack and defense creditably. What he lacked was the will to admit complications. Even in the opening, most of his innovations are methods of simplification. His genius was rectilineal, so to speak—suspense, uncertainty were intolerable. He always played the board, never the opponent, which added to the objective value of his games but made it so much harder for him to be successful. Curiously, in most of his greater games the Rook and Bishop—straight line pieces—stand out. Knights are rarely seen; Queens, made for combined operations, are likewise infrequent.

!?

see also Capa

In the endgame he is supreme. Here he could execute a set plan with little hindrance. And it is here, above all, that he provides us with an inexhaustible galaxy of masterpieces. In Rook and pawn endings especially, he is beyond compare. To cite but one example, we need only recall his game with Mattison at Carlsbad, in 1929, which his colleagues called black magic.

While we have emphasized the finales, it must not be supposed that Rubinstein could not play all-round great chess. Quite the contrary. We are enchanted by Rubinstein's play because of its objectivity, its clarity, and its precision. On the whole, in fact, his games are comparable to the best.

Rubinstein's masterpieces are the priceless legacy of an unhappy genius. His immortal win against Rotlevi is one of the most famous games of all time. It was a harbinger of his brilliant future.

ROTLEVI RUBINSTEIN

Lodz, 1907

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 P–Q4 P–Q4
2 N–KB3 P–K3
3 P–K3 P–QB4
4 P–B4 N–QB3
5 N–B3 N–B3
6 QPxP?

A positional error. 6 B–Q3 is good enough for equality.

6 . . . BxP
7 P–QR3 P–QR3
8 P–QN4 B–Q3

If 9 PxP PxP *10* NxP? NxN *11* QxN BxPch.

9 B–N2 O–O
10 Q–Q2?

Sadly neglecting his development. *10* PxP PxP *11* B–K2 should have been played.

10 . . . Q–K2!
11 B–Q3?

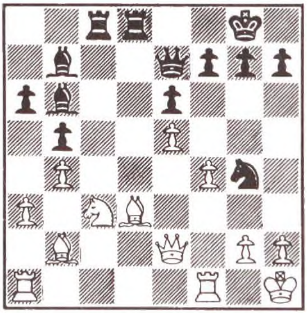
Confused by the complications, he makes a second error. *11* PxP PxP *12* B–K2 was not too bad.

11 . . . PxP!
12 BxP P–QN4
13 B–Q3 R–Q1
14 Q–K2 B–N2
15 O–O N–K4
16 NxN BxN
17 P–B4

White is oblivious of the dangers; the chess world must be grateful to him.

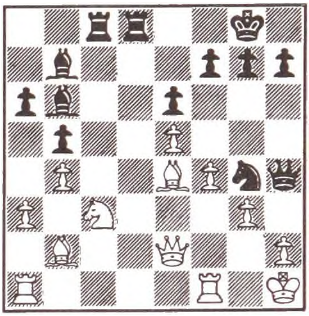
17 . . . B–B2
18 P–K4? QR–B1
19 P–K5 B–N3ch
20 K–R1 N–N5!

The fun begins.



21 B–K4 Q–R5
22 P–N3

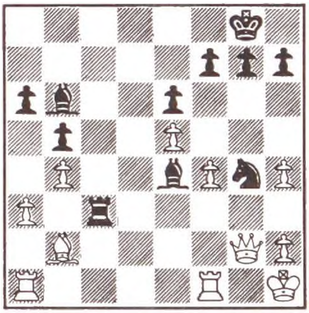
If P–R3 BxB *23* NxB N–K6 wins.



22 . . . RxN!!

A stunning sacrifice, and a prelude to many more.

23 PxQ R–Q7!!!
24 QxR BxBch
25 Q–N2



Now comes the final gem—

25 . . . R–R6!!!!
Resigns

It was indeed unfortunate that no match could ever be arranged between Lasker and Rubinstein. In the first encounter between them, the younger man produced a masterpiece.

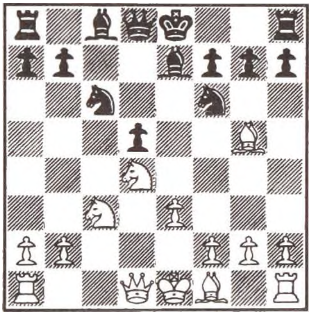
RUBINSTEIN **LASKER**

St. Petersburg, 1909

Queen's Gambit Declined

1	P–Q4	P–Q4
2	N–KB3	N–KB3
3	P–B4	P–K3
4	B–N5	P–B4?
5	PxQP	KPxP
6	N–B3	PxP
7	NxP	N–B3
8	P–K3	B–K2

Lasker has played the opening poorly and has a definite inferiority.



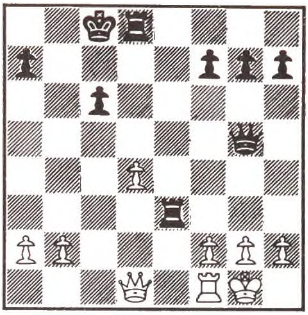
9	B–N5	B–Q2
10	BxKN?	

Needlessly complicating matters. Better was simply B–K2.

10	. . .	BxB
11	NxP	BxN
12	PxB	Q–N4
13	BxN	BxB
14	N–K3	O–O–O?

Correct was . . . BxP 15 R–KN1 Q–R4ch with equality, for if 16 Q–Q2 QxQch 17 KxQ B–K5 18 RxP? B–N3!.

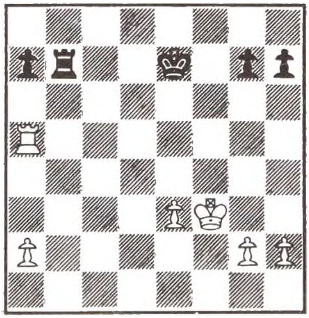
15	O–O	KR–K1
16	R–B1!	RxN
17	RxBch	PxR



18	Q–B1!!	RxP
19	PxR	R–Q2
20	QxPch	K–Q1
21	R–B4!	

Threatening Q–R8ch and R–K4ch.

21	. . .	P–B4
22	Q–B5	Q–K2
23	QxQch	KxQ
24	RxP	R–Q8ch
25	K–B2	R–Q7ch
26	K–B3	RxQNP
27	R–QR5	R–N2



Now we are treated with a masterful Rubinstein endgame.

28 R–R6

First restriction . . .

28 . . . K–B1
29 P–K4

Then advance . . .

29 . . . R–QB2
30 P–KR4 K–B2
31 P–N4 K–B1
32 K–B4

Finally invasion.

32 . . . K–K2
33 P–R5 P–R3
34 K–B5 K–B2
35 P–K5 R–N2
36 R–Q6

Threatening R–Q7ch! RxR 38 P–K6ch K–K2 39 PxR KxP 40 K–N6.

36 . . . K–K2
37 R–R6 K–B2
38 R–Q6

Slowly but surely.

38 . . . K–B1
39 R–QB6 K–B2
40 P–R3! Resigns

Black is in "zugzwang." If the King moves, K–N6 is decisive. And if 40 . . . R–K2 41 P–K6ch K–N1 42 K–N6.

The war brought about a marked change in Rubinstein's personality. He became very withdrawn and uncommunicative. Curiously, this was paralleled by an increasing aggressiveness in his chess style. It was no longer the prudent Rubinstein of old. And his results showed it. Yet on many occasions he could still turn out things of beauty. Here is an elegant win over a future world champion.

EUWE RUBINSTEIN

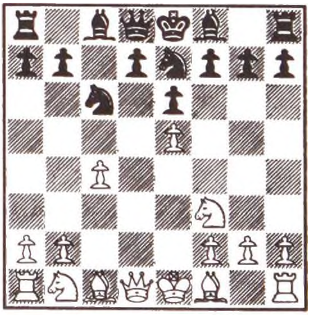
The Hague, 1921
Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 N–KB3 N–KB3
3 P–K5 N–Q4
4 P–Q4

Not the best, as the game shows. N–B3 is preferable.

4 . . . PxP
5 QxP P–K3
6 P–B4 N–QB3
7 Q–Q1 KN–K2

Aiming at the KP.



8 B–Q2 N–N3
9 Q–K2

9 B–B3 Q–B2 leads back to the game by transposition.

9 . . . Q–B2
10 B–B3 P–QN3
11 P–KR4

To get some kind of development.

11 . . . P–Q3!
12 PxP BxP
13 QN–Q2

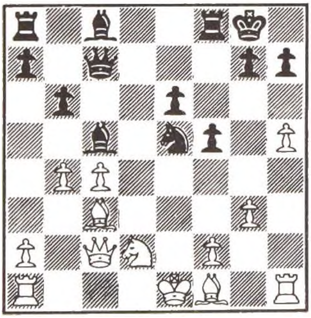
13 BxP R–KN1 *14* B–B3 N–B5 is no improvement.

13 . . . N–B5
14 Q–K3 B–B4
15 Q–K4 P–B4
16 Q–B2 O–O!

Black is splendidly developed. Some combination is bound to appear.

17 P–KN3 N–N3
18 P–R5 N(N3)–K4
19 NxN NxN
20 P–QN4

Hoping for . . . B–K2 *21* B–N2.



20 . . . BxPch!

The logical result of a perfect preparation.

21 KxB N–N5ch
22 K–K2 QxNP
23 B–Q4 B–N2
24 R–R3 Q–Q3
25 Q–B3 P–K4
26 B–N1 P–B5

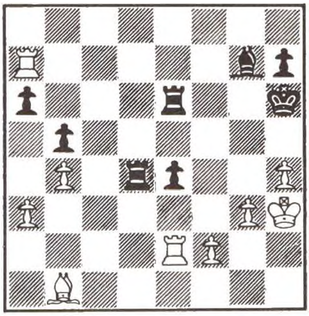
White is helpless against the avalanche.

27 P–B5 Q–R3
28 K–K1 P–K5
29 R–R4 Q–N4
30 Q–KR3 N–K6!
31 BxN PxB
32 B–B4ch K–R1
33 N–B1 Q–B3!
Resigns

It was in games such as these that Rubinstein came as close to achieving perfection as any mortal.

Here are some more examples of Rubinstein's wizardry:

Gruenfeld

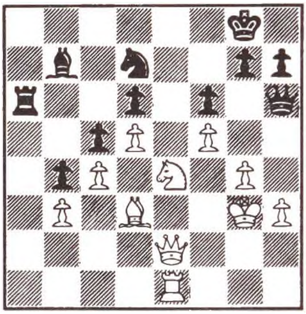


Rubinstein—TO PLAY

Semmering, 1926

1	BxP!	R(Q5)xB
2	RxR	RxR
3	RxPch	K–R4
4	P–B3	Resigns

Nimzovich

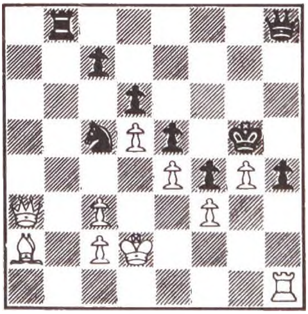


Rubinstein—TO PLAY

Berlin, 1928

1	NxQP!	RxN
2	Q–K8ch	N–B1
3	R–K7	P–KN3
4	Q–B7ch	K–R1
5	R–K8	R–Q1
6	QxBPch	K–N1
7	Q–K6ch	K–N2
8	P–B6ch	Resigns

Rubinstein—TO PLAY

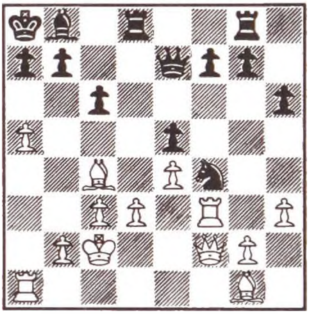


Wolf

Teplitz-Schonau, 1922

1	. . .	R–QR1
2	Q–N2	P–R6!
3	B–B4	Q–R5
4	B–K2	Q–B7!!
5	RxP	Q–K6ch
6	K–K1	N–R5
	Resigns	

Hromadka



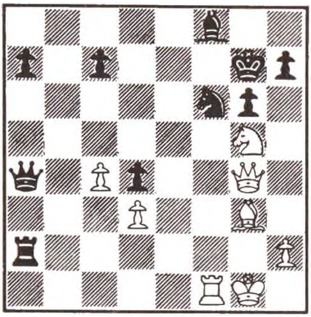
Rubinstein—TO PLAY

Mahrisch-Ostrau, 1923

1	P–KN3	NxRP
2	RxP	Q–Q3
3	Q–N6!!	R–Q2
4	B–B5	RxR
5	BxQ	R–B7ch
6	QxR!	NxQ
7	B–B5!	Resigns

The Knight is lost.

Marshall

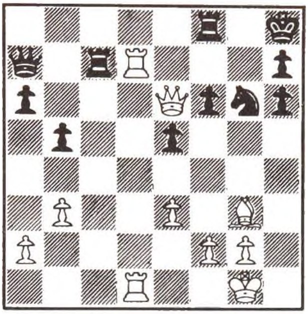


Rubinstein—TO PLAY

Lodz, 1908

1	RxN!	KxR
2	Q–B4ch	K–K2
3	Q–B7ch	K–Q1
4	N–K6ch	Resigns

Maroczy



Rubinstein—TO PLAY

Gothenburg, 1920

1	B–R4!!	Resigns

For if 1 . . . NxB 2 Q–K7!.

Frank James Marshall

Five years after Pillsbury stormed the chess world at Hastings in 1895, another American, Frank Marshall, made his international debut at Paris in 1900. While he finished only fourth, it soon became abundantly clear that America had added a new star to the chess firmament. Pillsbury died a few years later, and for almost thirty years Marshall was the outstanding American master and the leading U.S. representative in international play.

Marshall was born in New York in 1877. When he was eight years old his family moved to Montreal. Here young Frank learned the game from his father, and, as he says in his autobiography, "As a child I had an unusual aptitude for chess. I took to it naturally, like a duck to water." Soon he was participating in the Montreal chess clubs. At sixteen he got his first big chance in a simultaneous exhibition against Steinitz. Although Frank lost the game, Steinitz predicted a brilliant future for him if he continued to play chess. Of this Marshall writes: "If I continued to play chess? Nothing could have stopped me. There was nothing else I wanted to do. Chess began to absorb my whole life. My head was full of it, from morning to night—and in my dreams as well. Gradually, it crowded out every other interest. I knew that I was going to devote my life to chess."

Chess did become his great devotion. After a few years he was second only to Pillsbury in America. In international play he made his mark in a number of tournaments; his greatest success was first prize at Cambridge Springs in 1904, ahead of Pillsbury and Lasker. Pillsbury died soon afterward, and until the early thirties Marshall was the acknowledged king of American chess; he retired undefeated in 1936. In those years he played in every tournament that he could gain access to. Shortly before he died in 1944, a story in *Life* magazine described him as a "preoccupied old gentleman who looks like a Shakespearean actor, smokes strong cigars incessantly and takes a chess board to bed with him so he can record any plays he may think up." He admitted to being preoccupied, and added that since the age of ten not a day had gone by in which he had not played at least one game of chess.

I first visited the Marshall Chess Club in the spring of 1929 to play in a high school team match. Toward the end of the evening, a dignified gentleman with an old-fashioned lavaliere tie came in and followed the games with keen interest. Afterward he joined in the post-mortems and showed us moves that we had never dreamed of. I was amazed to discover that the friendly kibitzer was the great Marshall.

Frank was like that—simple, democratic, full of encouragement and good cheer, glad to analyze any position that looked promising and more that did not. A whole generation of masters grew up around his cheerful twinkle and powerful cigars. He was an ideal man to create inspiration and real team spirit.

In personality Frank was anything but the stereotyped version of a chess master. He liked everything that pertained to good living. He could sit and recount stories of his chess exploits by the hour, especially after he had partaken of a little stimulation. Most of his stories told of how he could have won this or that tournament. One I remember very well. In one European tournament, he was scheduled to play Marco the next day. The night before, Marco came to see him and said, "Frank, I don't feel well." "What's the matter?" "Stomach." "Here—take this," and Marco was given a drink, which Frank shared. But Marco was still sick, and so they had a few more. "The next day he beat me like a child," Frank woefully concluded.

Marshall was what we call a "natural" player—his bent was for the attack. The tradition he followed was that of Anderssen and Blackburne rather than Steinitz and Lasker. Because he was so willing to take chances, even against the greatest, he never quite managed to reach the world championship class, though he was always a high-prize winner and a feared opponent. Positional subtleties meant little to Frank; he cared for the acrobatics of the pieces. I was often amazed by his incredible ingenuity in the most sterile positions; where others tried to compromise he took bold chances—and was usually justified. It was with good reason that European writers liked to refer to him as "*der geniale findigreiche Amerikaner*"—the gifted American who was so rich in resourcefulness. I have never met anyone, not even Alekhine, who had a keener eve for the purely combinative side of chess.

Here is a beautiful game from his early days, which Frank himself described as a "real fourth of July fireworks show from beginning to end."

MARSHALL **TCHIGORIN**

Ostend, 1905
Dutch Defense

1 **P–Q4** **P–KB4**

Provoking the gambit, but Marshall needs little provocation!

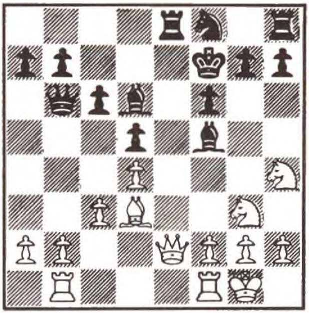
2 **P–K4** **PxP**
3 **N–QB3** **N–KB3**
4 **B–KN5** **P–B3**
5 **BxN**

Nowadays we prefer P–B3, which confers a more lasting attack.

5 . . . **KPxB**
6 **NxP** **Q–N3**

Unnecessary complications.

7 **R–N1** **P–Q4**
8 **N–N3** **B–K3**
9 **B–Q3** **N–Q2**
10 **Q–K2** **K–B2**
11 **N–B3** **R–K1**
12 **O–O** **B–Q3**
13 **P–B3** **N–B1**
14 **N–R4** **B–KB4**



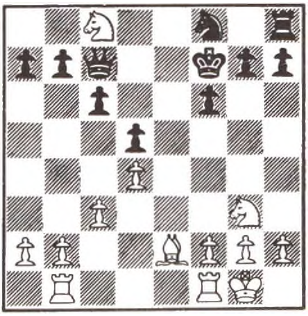
15 **N(R4)xB!!** **RxQ**
16 **NxBch** **K–K3**

To trap the Knight.

17 **N–B8** **Q–B2**
18 **BxR** **K–B2**

The point is that after . . . QxN 19 B–N4ch wins the Queen.

Marshall gives the pretty alternative 18 . . . P–KN3 19 KR–K1! P–KB4 20 B–B3 dis ch K–B3 21 N–K7 N–K3 22 BxP and wins.



It is still not clear how White can extricate his Knight . . .

19 N–B5!!

The real key.

19 . . . N–K3
20 N(B5)–Q6ch K–N3
21 B–Q3ch K–R4

Hoping to obtain the two Knights for his Rook.

22 QR–K1 N–B5
23 R–K7 Q–R4
24 B–N1

B–B2 is a bit quicker.

24 . . . P–KN3
25 P–KN3

Preparing the mate.

25 . . . N–R6ch
26 K–N2 N–N4
27 B–Q3 RxN
28 NxR Q–Q1
29 P–KR4! QxN

Or . . . N–B2 30 RxN QxN 31 RxPch K–N5 32 P–B3 mate.

30 PxN Resigns

Frank won innumerable brilliancy prizes in the course of his career. The fact that the following game won only second prize aroused a storm of protest from its many admirers.

MARSHALL BOGOLYUBOV

New York, 1924

Queen's Gambit Declined

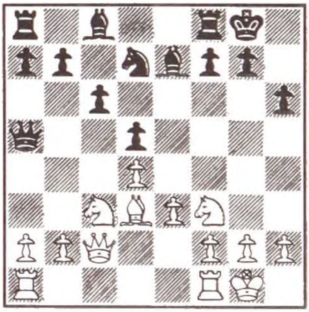
1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 N–KB3 P–K3
3 B–N5 P–Q4
4 P–K3 QN–Q2
5 P–B4 P–B3
6 PxP

To avoid the Cambridge Springs Defense (6 N–B3 Q–R4).

6 . . . KPxP
7 N–B3 Q–R4?

A time-waster in this position.

8 B–Q3 N–K5
9 Q–B2 NxB
10 NxN P–KR3
11 N–B3 B–K2
12 O–O O–O



13 P–QR3 Q–Q1

A necessary retreat.

14 QR–K1 P–QR4

Another loss of time. B–Q3 was better.

15 Q–K2! N–B3?

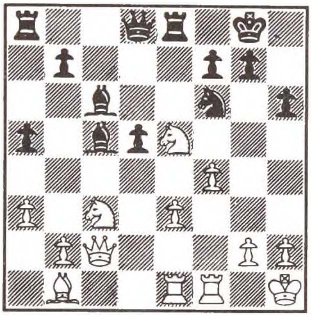
Again B–Q3 was preferable.

16 N–K5 B–Q3
17 P–B4 P–B4
18 B–N1 B–Q2
19 Q–QB2 B–B3

To play . . . N–K5.

20 PxP! BxP
21 K–R1 R–K1

Not 21 . . . N–K5? for 22 NxN costs him a piece.



22 P–K4!!

The most profound move of the game. If in reply 22 . . . PxP 23 NxB PxN 24 NxP NxN 25 RxN RxR 26 QxR P–N3 27 P–B5 wins.

22 . . . B–Q5
23 NxB PxN
24 P–K5 N–N5
25 Q–R7ch K–B1
26 P–KN3

The game is still not easy. If 26 Q–R8ch K–K2 27 QxNP R–KN1, with a strong counterattack.

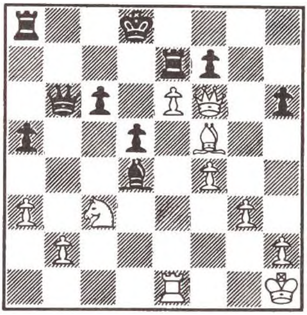
26 . . . Q–N3
27 B–B5!!

The beauty of this game lies in moves such as these; the point will soon be clear.

27 . . . N–B7ch
28 RxN! BxR
29 Q–R8ch K–K2
30 QxNP K–Q1

If instead 30 . . . BxR Black is mated: 31 Q–B6ch K–B1 32 QxRPch! K–N1 (or 32 . . . K–K2 33 Q–Q6 mate) 33 B–R7ch K–R1 34 B–N6ch K–N1 35 Q–R7ch and mate next.

31 Q–B6ch R–K2
32 P–K6! B–Q5



33 PxP!! BxQ
34 P–B8=Qch K–B2
35 RxRch BxR
36 QxR K–Q3
37 Q–R8! Q–Q1
38 Q–K5ch, and White announced mate in five.

The finish would have been: 38 . . . K–B4 39 N–R4ch K–B5 40 Q–B3ch K–N4 41 B–Q3ch KxN 42 Q–B2 mate.

For some reason, Marshall always played beautifully against Nimzovich. "I can beat him like a child," Frank used to say. Here is a game which won him a first brilliancy prize.

NIMZOVICH MARSHALL

Bad Kissingen, 1928
Queen's Indian Defense

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–QN3
3 N–QB3

P–B3 is strong.

3 . . . B–N2
4 B–N5

A rather illogical move, not what one would expect from a Nimzovich.

4 . . . P–K3
5 Q–B2 P–KR3
6 B–R4 B–K2
7 P–K4

Marshall was trying to provoke this move.

7 . . . O–O
8 P–K5

If 8 B–Q3 N–B3! is too strong.

8 . . . N–Q4!

The mixing has begun!

9 B–N3

Marshall recommends BxB instead.

9 . . . N–N5
10 Q–N3 P–Q4!

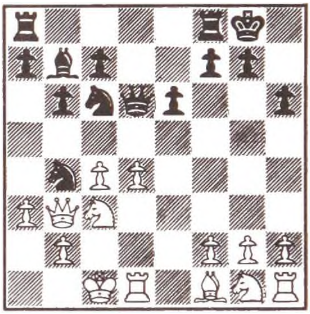
Frank is in his element.

11 PxP e.p. KBxP
12 O–O–O

Risky, but what else was there?

12 . . . QN–B3
13 BxB QxB
14 P–QR3

Invites an elegant refutation, but there was no good defense.



14 . . . NxP!
15 RxN

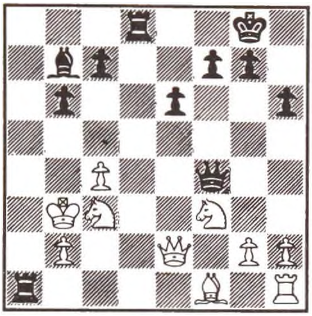
Or 15 QxN P–QB4 16 Q–R4 B–B3 17 Q–R6 Q–B5ch 18 K–N1 QxP wins.

15 . . . QxR
16 PxN QxKBP
17 Q–Q1 KR–Q1
18 Q–K2 Q–B5ch
19 K–B2 P–QR4!

A surprising maneuver!

20 PxP RxP
21 N–B3 R–R8
22 K–N3

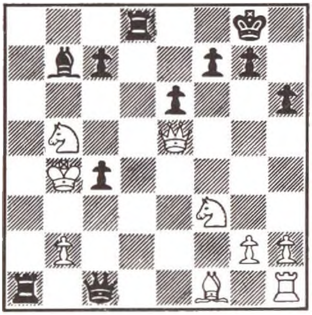
Apparently the King has reached an asylum.



22 . . . P–QN4!!
23 Q–K5

If 23 PxP B–Q4; and if 23 NxP B–K5 followed by . . . P–QB3.

23 . . . PxPch
24 K–N4 Q–B8
25 N–QN5



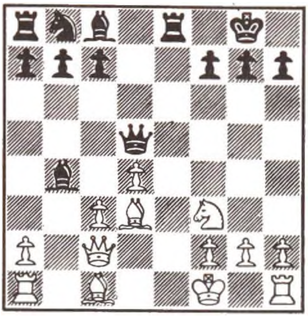
25 . . . P–B4ch!

With problemlike precision. If 26 QxP QxPch 27 KxP R–R5ch.

Resigns

Here are some more snapshots of Marshall at his sacrificial best.

Marshall—TO PLAY

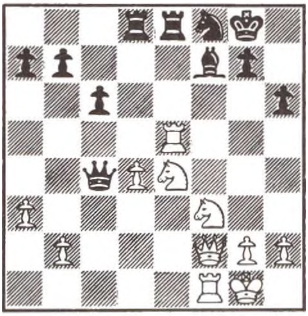


Janowsky

Match, 1912

1 . . . QxN
2 PxB N–B3!
3 B–N2 NxNP!!
4 BxPch K–R1
5 PxQ B–R6ch
6 K–N1 NxQ
7 BxN R–K7
8 R–QB1 QR–K1
9 B–B3 R(K1)–K6
10 B–N4 RxP(B6)
11 B–Q1 R–B3
Resigns

Rubinstein

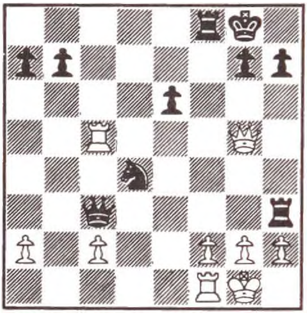


Marshall—TO PLAY

Moscow, 1925

1	P–QN3!	QxNP
2	N(B3)–Q2	Q–R7
3	N–QB3	Resigns

Marshall—TO PLAY



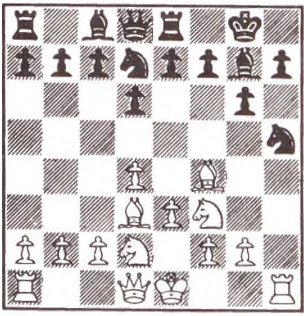
Levitsky

Breslau, 1912

1 . . . Q–KN6!!!
Resigns

The spectators were so thrilled with this magnificent play that they showered the board with gold pieces.

Burn



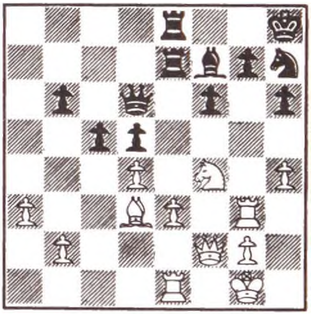
Marshall—TO PLAY

Ostend, 1907

The game where Burn never had a chance to light his pipe!

1	RxN!	PxR
2	BxPch!	KxB
3	N–N5ch	K–N3
4	QN–B3	P–K4
5	N–R4ch	K–B3
6	N–R7ch	K–K2
7	N–B5ch	K–K3
8	NxBch	K–K2
9	N–B5ch	K–K3
10	P–Q5ch	KxN
11	QxPch	K–K5
12	O–O–O	Resigns

Kupchik



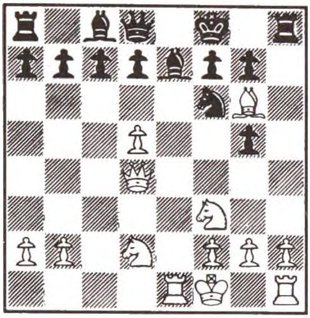
Marshall—TO PLAY

Chicago, 1926

1 RxP! and wins.

For if . . . KxR 2 Q–N3ch, any 3 N check wins the Queen.

Burn



Marshall—TO PLAY

Ostend, 1905

1	N–K5!	PxB
2	NxNPch	K–B2
3	RxBch	KxN
4	Q–Q3ch	K–R3
5	P–KR4!	P–N5
6	P–R5	NxP
7	Q–B5	P–KN3
8	RxNch	PxR
9	Q–B6 mate	

Karl Schlechter

Of all Lasker's rivals, the one who came closest to dethroning him was the Viennese Karl Schlechter. In their match in 1910, Schlechter was leading by one point at the end of nine games; the match was a ten-game affair. In the last game Schlechter had an easy draw, which he disdained, and thereby threw away his chance for the title, since Lasker won and retained his title in the event of a draw match!

Schlechter was born in Vienna in 1874 and lived there all his life, until his death from starvation in 1918. He became a chess master at an early age and devoted his entire life to the pursuit of the game. In all my peregrinations, I have never heard a single personal story about Schlechter—good, bad, or indifferent. Apart from drawn matches with Lasker and Tarrasch, his greatest achievement was first prize at Hamburg, 1910.

It was in his play against the great Lasker at Cambridge Springs, 1904, that Schlechter shone. Here is the game which netted him the first brilliancy prize.

SCHLECHTER LASKER

Cambridge Springs, 1904

Queen's Gambit Declined

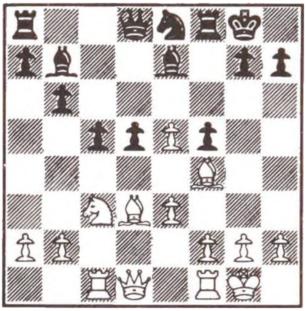
1	P–Q4	P–Q4
2	P–QB4	P–K3
3	N–QB3	N–KB3
4	B–N5	B–K2
5	P–K3	O–O
6	N–B3	P–QN3

Later renamed the Tartakower variation and recently revived.

7	B–Q3	B–N2
8	PxP	PxP
9	N–K5	P–B4
10	R–QB1	N–B3
11	O–O	NxN
12	PxN	N–K1
13	B–KB4	

Banking on his K-side attack.

13 . . . P–B4



14 Q–B2! P–KN4
15 B–N3 P–KB5?

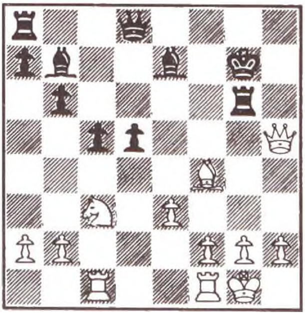
Schlechter hoped to provoke this.

16 BxPch K–R1
17 Q–N6

Threatening Q–R6.

17 . . . N–B3
18 PxN RxP
19 Q–R5 K–N2
20 QxPch KxB
21 BxP R–N3
22 Q–R5ch K–N2

Two pawns ahead, White wins easily.



23 KR–Q1 P–Q5
24 B–N3 R–N4
25 B–K5ch! K–N1

Not . . . B–B3 26 QxRch.

26 Q–R8ch K–B2
27 Q–R7ch K–K3
28 B–N3 PxN
29 RxQ PxP
30 R(Q8)–Q1 PxR=Q
31 RxQ R–Q1
32 P–B4 R(N4)–Q4
33 P–K4! R–Q8ch
34 RxR RxRch
35 K–B2 R–Q5
36 P–B5ch K–Q2
37 P–K5 Resigns

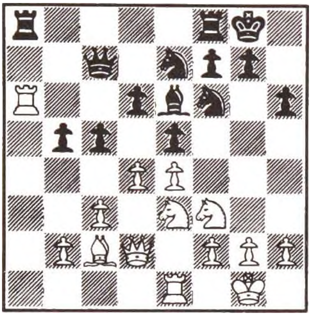
Although Schlechter was chiefly a pacific positional player, he could produce many dashing sacrifices. Here is the conclusion of a game which won him a first brilliancy prize.

SCHLECHTER SALVE

St. Petersburg, 1909

Ruy Lopez

1 P–K4 P–K4 *2* N–KB3 N–QB3 *3* B–N5 P–QR3 *4* B–R4 N–B3 *5* O–O B–K2 *6* R–K1 P–QN4 *7* B–N3 P–Q3 *8* P–B3 N–QR4 *9* B–B2 P–B4 *10* P–Q3 N–B3 *11* QN–Q2 O–O *12* N–B1 Q–B2 *13* B–N5 N–K1 *14* N–K3 BxB *15* NxB N–K2 *16* P–QR4 R–N1 *17* PxP PxP *18* Q–Q2 P–R3 *19* N–B3 B–K3 *20* P–Q4 N–KB3 *21* R–R6 R–R1.



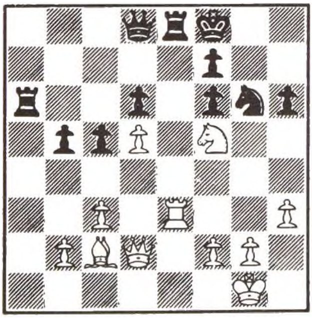
22 PxKP!? RxR?

Correct is . . . NxP!.

23 PxN PxP
24 N–Q5 BxN
25 PxB K–N2
26 N–R4 R–K1
27 P–R3

To ward off mate threats.

27 . . . Q–Q1
28 R–K3 N–N3
29 N–B5ch K–B1



30 R–K6!!

An elegant finale.

30 . . . RxR

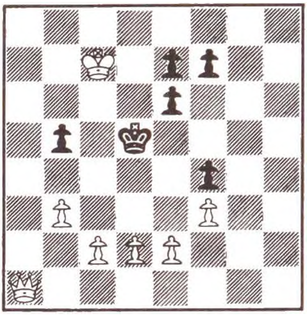
30 . . . PxR 31 QxPch leads to mate.

31 PxR P–Q4
32 QxPch K–K1
33 PxPch KxP
34 Q–R7ch K–K3
35 QxN

Finis. The rest exists because chess masters are human.

35 . . . R–R7
36 P–QN4! PxP
37 N–Q4ch K–Q2
38 B–B5ch Resigns

Schlechter was also famous in his day as a problem composer. Here is one of his prettiest themes.



White to Play and Mate in Three

The solution is 1 P–N4!, with the main variation running: 1 . . . K–B5 2 Q–B3ch K–Q4 3 Q–B5 mate.

David Janowsky

Janowsky managed to get enough backing to play three matches with Lasker, although he really offered rather weak opposition. Born in Poland, he emigrated to France when he was still young and soon became one of the "regulars" of the chess tournaments. His play was bold and dashing, which earned him many brilliancy prizes, ~~but also~~ many zeroes when the sacrifices failed.

Jan, as he was affectionately nicknamed in his later years in New York, was one of the most colorful figures of his time. He was an inveterate gambler and would usually manage to lose his chess earnings at the roulette table. On many occasions chess tournaments have been promoted by gambling casinos, and Jan was frequently torn between his two loves. Once, the story goes, he foresaw what would happen and gave a friend his money for safekeeping, with the solemn promise that it would not be turned over until he had left the gambling resort. By the middle of the tournament Janowsky could hold out no longer and demanded his money back. The friend refused, and Jan was so enraged that he sued him!

In his New York days Jan became famous as a master of alibis as well as of chess. The radiator was too hot or too cold, the windows were open too far or too little—there was always something which spoiled his play. Finally a tournament committee went to great lengths to make sure that everything was perfect. At this Jan was more furious than ever. "You have deliberately deprived me of any conceivable alibi," he stormed; "how can I possibly do my best?"

Janowsky's forte was his attacking ability. Here is one of his most famous games.

JANOWSKY SCHALLOP

Nuremberg, 1896

Queen's Gambit Accepted

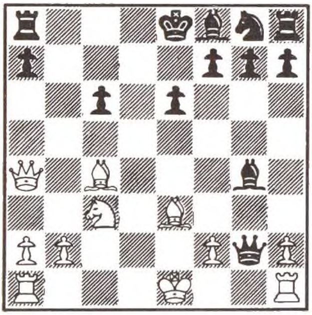
1	P–Q4	P–Q4
2	P–QB4	PxP
3	N–KB3	P–QB4
4	P–K3	PxP
5	PxP	B–N5?

Premature.

6	BxP	P–K3
7	Q–R4ch!	N–B3
8	N–K5!	QxP
9	NxN	Q–K5ch
10	B–K3	PxN

Not . . . QxN *11* B–N5.

11	N–B3	QxP

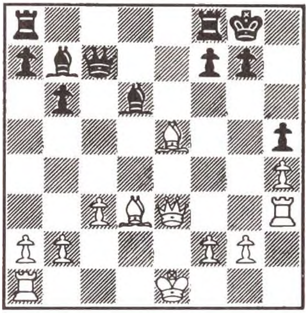


12	B–Q5!!	KPxB
13	QxPch	K–Q1
14	QxRch	K–Q2
15	Q–N7ch	K–K3
16	Q–B6ch	B–Q3
17	B–B4	Resigns

If he captures both Rooks he is mated: *17* . . . QxRch *18* K–Q2 QxR *19* QxBch K–B4 *20* Q–K5ch K–N3 *21* Q–N5 mate.

Here is the startling finish from a game which won him the brilliancy prize at Marienbad, 1925.

Sämisch



Janowsky—TO PLAY

1	Q–R6!!!	Resigns

For if *1* . . . PxQ 2 R–N3 mate. The best try is *1* . . . P–B3, but then 2 R–N3 BxB 3 Q–R7ch K–B2 *4* RxPch wins hands down.

Geza Maroczy

Hungary has long been the birthplace of many a chess master, and Maroczy was its leading light in the early years of this century. Born in 1870, he first rose to prominence at the minor tournament in Hastings, 1895. Until 1908 he played regularly in international contests and was invariably a high-prize winner. After that, he retired and devoted himself to his engineering profession.

When I first met him in the 1930s, he was the genial *Altmeister*, who came to chess tournaments for the fun of it and cared little whether he won or lost. He was really too fond of simple living; "ambition should be made of sterner stuff." When he refereed the Euwe-Alekhine world championship match in 1937, he brought along some paprika from his native land and ate it with every meal. With such contentment, why work hard at chess?

Maroczy was a solid master of the positional school. On occasion though, he could produce some hard-fought tactical battles. Here is one of his best.

JANOWSKY MAROCZY

Munich, 1900

Albin's Counter Gambit

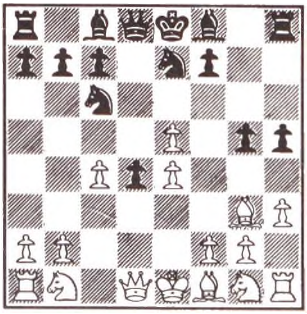
1	P–Q4	P–Q4
2	P–QB4	P–K4
3	PxKP	P–Q5

Today considered unsound.

4 P–K4?

Weak. 4 N–KB3 is the refutation; with straight development, White eventually gives back the pawn and should get the better of it.

4	. . .	N–QB3
5	B–B4	KN–K2
6	B–N3	P–KR4
7	P–KR3	P–KN4!



White's position is uncomfortable.

8	P–KR4	P–N5
9	N–Q2	N–N3
10	P–B4	B–K2
11	B–Q3	NxRP!
12	Q–K2	N–N3
13	P–K6!	

So that if . . . BxP? 14 P–B5, and if . . . PxP 14 P–K5.

13 . . . P–R5!

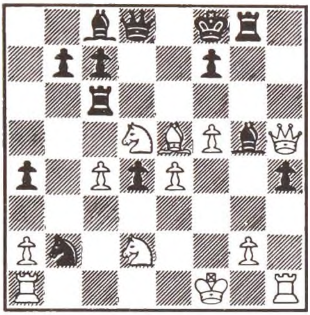
Rising to the occasion.

14	QxP	BxP
15	P–B5	B–QB1
16	B–R2	N(N3)–K4
17	Q–K2	NxBch
18	QxN	N–N5
19	Q–N3	P–QR4!

Janowsky does not stand much of a chance against the two Bishops (known as the two rabbis when he had them).

20	N–R3	P–R5
21	Q–Q1	N–Q6ch
22	K–B1	NxP
23	Q–N4	R–QR3!
24	N–B4	K–B1!
25	N–Q5	R–QB3

26 B–K5 R–N1
27 Q–R5 B–N4



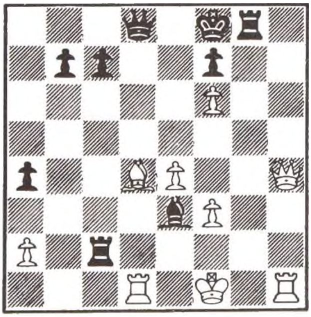
28 N–B3 NxP!
29 P–B6

A last hope.

29 . . . N–K6ch!
30 NxN BxN

Neither side has castled, but Black's King is much safer.

31 R–Q1 B–N5
32 QxP BxN
33 PxB R–B7
34 BxQP!



34 . . . Q–R1!!!

A magnificent finish. There is no defense against the threat of Q–R3ch.

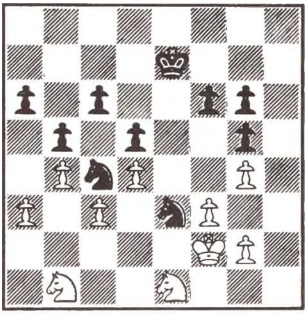
35 R–Q3 Q–R3
Resigns

Maroczy's most famous production is an endgame which has the appearance of a problem. After 33 moves of hopelessly dull maneuvering, the following position was reached:

MARCO MAROCZY

Vienna, 1899

Maroczy—TO PLAY



Marco

1 . . . K–Q3!!

Black has a forced win!

2 K–K2 K–B2
3 K–B2 K–N3

White is reduced to passivity.

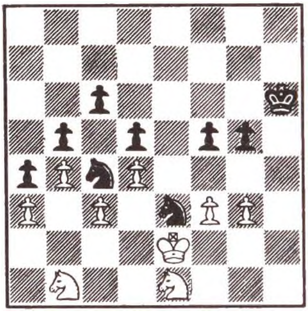
4 K–K2 P–R4

First the pawn goes to R5.

5 K–B2 P–R5
6 K–K2 K–B2
7 K–B2

Note that neither White Knight can move. If 7 N–Q3 N–B7 wins.

7 . . . K–Q3
8 K–K2 K–K2
9 K–B2 K–B2
10 K–K2 K–N2
11 K–B2 K–R2
12 P–N3 K–R3
13 K–K2 P–KB4
14 PxP PxP



The White Knights are still bound by the pawns. Black meanwhile prepares to bring his King into the fray.

15 K–B2 K–R4
16 K–K2 P–B5
17 PxP PxP
18 K–B2 K–N4
19 K–K2 K–R5
20 K–B2 K–R6!
21 N–Q3

The only chance.

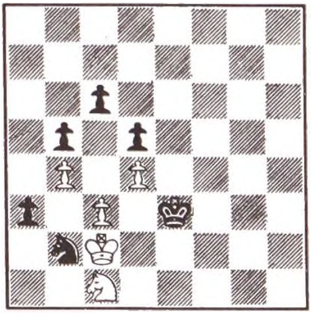
21 . . . N–B7
22 NxPch K–R5
23 N–Q3

If 23 N–N6ch K–N4 24 N–K5 N(B7)xP 25 N(N1)xN NxN 26 NxP N–B5, and the pawn queens.

23 . . . N(B7)xRP
24 NxN NxN
25 N–B1 N–N8
26 N–R2 K–R6
27 K–K3 K–N6
28 P–KB4 K–N5

Again White is in zugzwang and must sacrifice material.

29 P–B5 KxP
30 K–Q3 K–B5
31 N–B1 K–B6
32 K–B2 N–R6ch
33 K–Q3 K–B7
34 K–Q2 N–B5ch
35 K–Q1 K–K6
36 K–B2 P–R6!
37 N–R2 N–N7
38 N–B1



38 . . . N–Q6!!

The final blow. If 39 NxN P–R7 is decisive; and if 39 N–R2 K–K7.

39	N–N3	N–K8ch
40	K–Q1	K–Q6!
41	KxN	KxP
42	N–R1	KxQP!

A double finesse. 42 . . . K–N7? only draws after 43 K–Q2! KxN 44 K–B1.

43	N–B2ch	K–B6

The second finesse. If 44 NxP K–N7! and the Knight is stuck.

44	K–Q1	P–R7
45	K–B1	P–Q5
46	N–R1	P–Q6
47	N–B2	P–B4!
	Resigns	

Rudolf Charousek

At times in the history of the game there have been outstanding talents who did not reach the heights for which they were evidently destined because of premature death. Such a one was Rudolf Charousek. Playing over his early games is like reading Keats's poetry: you cannot help feeling a grievous, oppressive sense of loss, of promise unfulfilled. Born near Prague in 1873, he had become a finished master at twenty-three. At Nuremberg in 1896, his first masters' tournament, he did not even manage to win a prize, but he beat Lasker, Janowsky, and Blackburne in their individual encounters. In his brief career, he had impressed everyone; tributes poured in from everywhere at the memorial ceremonies in 1900. Here is his most famous victory.

CHAROUSEK TCHIGORIN

Budapest, 1896

King's Gambit

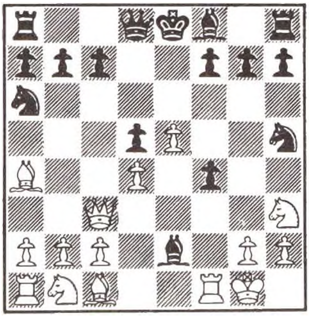
1	P–K4	P–K4
2	P–KB4	PxP
3	B–B4	N–QB3
4	P–Q4	N–B3
5	P–K5	P–Q4
6	B–N3	B–N5
7	Q–Q3	N–KR4

The kind of position Charousek loved.

8	N–KR3	N–N5
9	Q–QB3	N–R3
10	O–O	B–K7?

A needless waste of time.

11	B–R4ch!	



11	. . .	P–B3
12	BxPch!	PxB

13 QxPch	K–K2
14 NxP	NxN
15 BxN	P–R3

The Rook cannot be taken. If *15* . . . BxR *16* B–N5ch P–B3 *17* PxPch K–B2 *18* N–Q2 B–K7 *19* PxP BxP *20* BxQ KRxB *21* R–K1 and wins.

16 N–B3	B–B5
17 P–K6!	R–B1
18 B–B7!!	

The point.

18 . . .	PxP
19 BxQch	RxB
20 Q–N7ch	R–Q2
21 R–B7ch	KxR
22 QxRch	B–K2
23 R–K1	R–K1
24 P–QN3	K–B1
25 PxB	Resigns

Milan Vidmar

Vidmar was another of the rising young stars who withdrew from chess to devote himself to another profession. He became an electrical engineer and later professor of theoretical physics, rising to the position of one of the world's leading authorities in this field. After the First World War, Vidmar was appointed rector of the University in his native Yugoslavia. He died in 1962. He was one of the few chess masters who found a successor in his own family; his son Milan Jr. is a chess master and one of the top Yugoslav players.

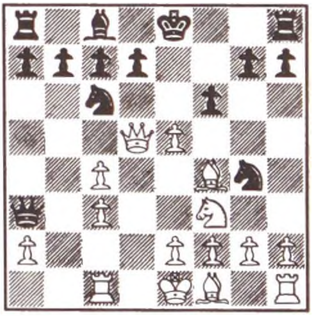
No particular traits distinguished Vidmar's chess style: he was an eclectic. Here is one of his finest wins.

RUBINSTEIN VIDMAR

Berlin, 1918

Budapest Defense

1 P–Q4	N–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K4
3 PxP	N–N5
4 B–B4	N–QB3
5 N–KB3	B–N5ch
6 N–B3	Q–K2
7 Q–Q5	BxNch
8 PxB	Q–R6
9 R–B1	P–B3

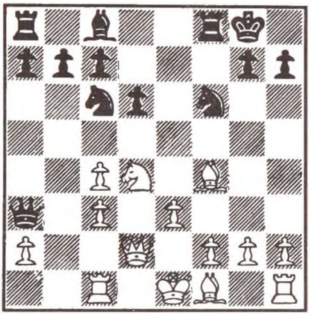


10 PxP

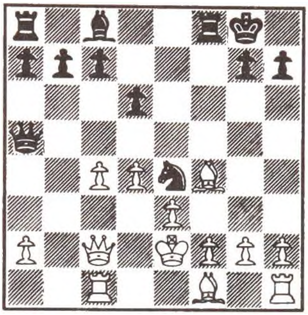
If *10* P–K6 PxP *11* Q–R5ch P–N3 *12* QxN P–K4, regaining the piece with a splendid position.

10 . . . NxP(B3)
11 Q–Q2 P–Q3
12 N–Q4 O–O
13 P–K3?

The fatal error. P–B3 and P–K4 give White a comfortable position, though Black retains the pressure for a long time.



13 . . . NxN
14 BPxN N–K5
15 Q–B2 Q–R4ch
16 K–K2



16 . . . RxB!

Naturally.

17 PxR B–B4
18 Q–N2 R–K1
19 K–B3 N–Q7ch

To gain time. The alternative . . . P–R4 *20* P–R3 P–R5 also wins.

20 K–N3 N–K5ch
21 K–R4

Or *21* K–B3, when Black continues with . . . P–R4 as above.

21 . . . R–K3
22 B–K2 R–R3ch
23 B–R5 RxBch!
24 KxR B–N3 dbl ch

And Black mates next move.

Dr. Ossip Bernstein

Among Lasker's younger contemporaries, none in his day was considered more promising than the Russian, Ossip Bernstein. Born in 1882, he became prominent at a rather early age when he made an excellent stand in a match against Winawer at Warsaw in 1901. In the Russian Championship of 1903 he led for a long time but fell back at the last moment and was overtaken by Tchigorin. His first international success came at Barmen in 1905, where he finished in a tie for fourth. After that he was a consistent prize winner in international play. After the war he emigrated to France, where he settled down to a law practice and retired from professional chess. In 1946 he resumed participation in chess tournaments, continuing with success remarkable for his age.

Bernstein was a highly imaginative player; a number of standard opening variations stem from him. Here is one of his outstanding victories.

BERNSTEIN **JANOWSKY**

Barmen, 1905

Albin's Counter Gambit

1 P–Q4 P–Q4
2 P–QB4 P–K4
3 PxKP P–Q5
4 N–KB3 N–QB3
5 QN–Q2

The strongest move.

5 . . . P–B3

Making a real gambit out of it. With 5 . . . KN–K2 Black eventually regains his pawn, but he gets the worst of it anyhow.

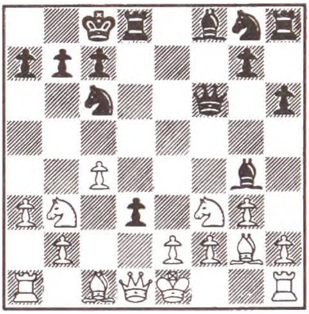
6 PxP QxP
7 N–N3

P–KN3 at once is preferable.

7 . . . B–N5!
8 P–QR3

To prevent the check.

8 . . . P–KR3
9 P–N3 O–O–O
10 B–N2 P–Q6!



To expose oneself to such an attack against Janowsky took courage in those days!

11 O–O! N–K4
12 B–B4 N–N3
13 B–K3 N–K4
14 B–B4

Stronger is 14 QN–Q2.

14 . . . NxNch?

Janowsky only worsens his game in his anxiety to avoid the draw.

15 PxN B–R4
16 Q–K1! B–B2
17 Q–R5!

This marauding maneuver unleashes White's attack.

17 . . . Q–QN3
18 Q–B3 N–B3
19 B–K3 Q–R3
20 N–Q2 P–KN4

A typical Janowsky motif—bold sacrifice to get an attack.

21 P–QN4! B–N2
22 P–N5 Q–K3

If instead 22 . . . Q–R5 23 Q–N4! forces the exchange and opens the R-file.

23 Q–R5!

Now White's attack breaks through.

23 . . . N–Q2
24 QxRP!

The exchange is of little importance.

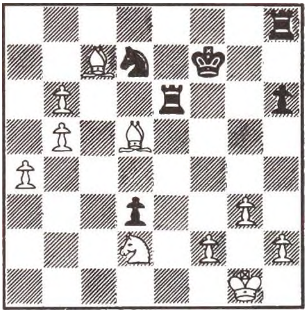
24 . . . BxR
25 P–B4! QR–N1
26 QxPch K–Q1
27 RxB PxP
28 BxP Q–QN3
29 Q–R8ch K–K2
30 R–K1ch B–K3
31 Q–K4 N–B4
32 Q–K5

Janowsky finds himself being defeated by a man with his own style!

32 . . . N–Q2
33 P–B5! NxQ
34 PxQ N–Q2
35 B–Q5 R–N3
36 BxP K–B2
37 RxB!

The *coup de grace.*

37 . . . RxR
38 P–QR4



A curious position: there is absolutely nothing to be done against the advance of the Q-side pawns.

38 . . . K–K2
39 BxR KxB
40 P–R5 K–Q4
41 P–R6 R–QB1
42 P–N7! RxB
43 P–R7 RxP
44 P–R8=Q N–B4
45 K–N2 K–Q5
46 N–N3ch! NxN
47 QxR P–Q7
48 Q–Q7ch K–B6
49 P–N6 N–Q5
50 Q–N4 K–Q6
51 P–N7 N–K7
52 Q–B3ch Resigns

6.

The Age of Capablanca

IT WAS in the age of Capablanca that the last great revolution in chess thinking, the so-called hypermodern school, took place. Capa himself had nothing to do with this revolution; he grasped its essence, took what was good and discarded what was bad in it. But the other masters were more deeply concerned with it, and in the 1920s chess critics in their theoretical writings talked of little else. Since that time chess theory has remained fundamentally unchanged, nor is it likely to change in the future. What we see instead of new schools is an increasing refinement of technique, especially in the openings and endgame. Lasker used to say that, when he was young, common-sense principles were sufficient for him in the openings, but by the time he was an old man no master could dispense with a precise knowledge of thousands of crucial variations. Even in amateur play more and more reliance is being placed on the "books."

Chess literature came to flourish as never before in this period. By the time of the Capablanca-Alekhine match in 1927, every important newspaper in the world carried full-length accounts of it. Chess had really become a universal language, and a number of chess masters took advantage of it to make a tour of the world. The number of professional masters increased enormously, especially in Europe. Chess had definitely arrived.

José Raoul Capablanca

In the constellation Caissa there has never been a more brilliant star than Capablanca. For a full quarter of a century he was the most renowned chess master alive. Millions who barely knew the moves had heard of the name and fame of the Cuban genius. To many devotees he was the perfect chessplayer, the chess machine, the only human being who had ever fully mastered all the intricacies of the royal game.

Jose Raoul Capablanca y Graupera was born in Havana, November 19, 1888, of a distinguished family. He learned the moves at the tender age of five by watching his father play. The boy was obviously so unusual that his family allowed him to go to the chess club and match wits with

Cuba's best there. In a few years he could beat almost everybody in sight. When he was twelve years old a match was arranged with Corzo, national champion and an experienced expert. Incredibly, Capa won. It was the first of a long series of unbelievable exploits.

In 1904 he was sent to school in New York. Emanuel Lasker was there, as well as Frank Marshall and a host of lesser celebrities. They were still far above Capa's head, but his progress was speedy. In rapid-transit (ten seconds per move) particularly, it was not too long before he was tops.

Then, in 1909, came his first really serious trial, the match with Marshall. To all but a few staunch admirers of the "unknown" Cuban, the outcome was a foregone conclusion. What happened is best told in Capa's own words:

"No difficulty was experienced in arranging the match. Marshall was disposed to play in this case where he naturally discounted his victory. How far he was wrong the result proved. I beat him eight to one with fourteen draws thrown in between. I can safely say that no player ever performed such a feat, as it was my first encounter against a master, and such a master—one of the first ten in the whole world. The most surprising feature of all was the fact that I played without having ever opened a book to study the openings."

Two years later, at San Sebastian in 1911, Capa met and overcame the best that the Old World had to offer. With every outstanding grandmaster present except Lasker, he finished first. Lasker, Capa, and Rubinstein (who unexpectedly weakened and dropped out of the running in 1914) were the superclass of the chess world.

Capa was anxious to arrange a match with Lasker, but the war prevented its realization for a full seven years. In 1921, Lasker agreed to play in Cuba. Unfortunately, Lasker was in inexplicably bad form. Several times he lost by outright blunders; after fourteen games, discouraged by repeated failure to hold his remorseless opponent, he resigned. That age had not really dulled his powers was shown at Mahrisch-Ostrau in 1923 and above all at New York in 1924. There has therefore been a great deal of speculation about whether Lasker at his best would have lost to Capa at his best. Any answer is a guess. This much is certain: Capablanca played remarkable chess all the way through and fully deserved both the victory and the world's championship.

As champion, Capa scored two first prizes, one second, and one third in four tournaments of outstanding importance. The climax came at New York in 1927, where he outclassed the field completely. The chess world was convinced that he had no equal.

Then came the greatest disappointment of his life, the match with Alekhine in 1927. Alekhine, who was full of fire and had devoted years to the study of the latest opening wrinkles, did not neglect the minutest detail, even in his sleeping habits, to prepare for his supreme chance.

Capa, obviously expecting to bowl his rival over as in the past, paid no attention to either his physical or psychological condition. The first game was a shock: in an even position, Capa made an outright blunder and heroic resistance merely prolonged the agony. While some lost ground was regained later, the realization that he was in for the most grueling battle of his life had unnerved Capa; after three months of suspense he was dethroned.

After the loss of his title, Capa continued to appear at fairly regular intervals. By and large, his results for the period 1928–1939 were just as good as Alekhine's, though Capa's victories at Nottingham and Moscow in 1936 are not so imposing qualitatively as Alekhine's at San Remo, 1930, and Bled, 1931. It must not be forgotten, however, that Alekhine's two greatest triumphs were scored against a fading generation of older men, whereas Capa was faced by a bunch of ambitious youngsters.

Capa's gift for chess was phenomenal. As Reti puts it, chess was his mother tongue. Combinations, position play, middlegame or endgame—in all he was supreme. Above all one must marvel at his intuitive grasp of the essentials of any situation that arose.

His speed in play was incredible in the earlier years. What others could not discover in a month's study he saw at a glance. Everything came to him as naturally as walking; effort, exertion, study were for him superfluous.

In many respects he was Fortune's darling. His countrymen—*mirabile dictu*—valued his genius, and an appointment to the Cuban Foreign Office in 1911 freed him of financial cares for the rest of his life. Handsome, suave, an accomplished linguist, he was immensely popular all over the world.

Yet, for all the favors showered on Capa, he was often dissatisfied with his own achievements, and we too, despite the rich heritage of his magnificent games, cannot avoid the feeling that he did not unfold his potentialities to the fullest degree. Why?

In the quest for the age-old illusion of immortality, man has set up three gradations in chess. The lowest is world's champion, next is the greatest champion of all time, and highest is the perfect chessplayer, the unique genius who never makes a mistake, the chess machine.

Capa was champion. Had he taken his miraculous flair for the game as a starting point and exerted himself to progress beyond it, instead of avoiding everything that could not be acquired effortlessly, he might well have become the most successful master of all time. But his crowning error—and it is this which imparted an unmistakable note of tragedy in his life—was the notion that he could play perfect chess, that he, Capa, was the instrument God had chosen to express His will on the chessboard, that he, Capa, was the chess machine, selected as the only man who ever knew all the answers, the only chess master who could never go wrong. These are but idle dreams, it may be protested, which could never have exerted any real influence. Nevertheless, they are the sole rational explanation of the many puzzling features in Capa's career. As early as 1920, before the title was definitely his, he felt impelled to write in *My Chess Career* (an admirable reflection of his personality):

"There have been times in my life when I came very near thinking that I could not lose even a single game of chess. Then I would be beaten, and the lost game would bring me back from dreamland to earth."

As far as style goes, there were three Capablancas. The first was the boy who, like every aspiring youngster, thought of brilliancies, attack at all cost. Then came the budding grandmaster, who tempered his combinative urge with sound position play and ingenious endings. Finally we see the mature champion, distinguished chiefly for his clocklike precision in the exploitation of small advantages, his dislike of complication, and his addiction to clarity above all. It is this last Capa whom the chess world knows best; this is the style which gained him the sobriquet of "chess machine." Yet the other two were always there, as he had occasion to show time and again.

The need for clarity above all became more and more of a passion with Capablanca as time went on. For he could handle complications as well as anybody and better than most, but they required thought and effort; they were hard, yes, subject to the whims of chance now and then. Clear positions presented no problems; others might gape and wonder and try in vain to analyze how he did it—what really mattered was that to Capa they were as easy as breathing.

Yet Capa obviously felt that he could do better, that he could attack and sacrifice as well as he could play the ending. What restrained him was the lack of ambition more than anything else, for though his "dreamland" where he would never lose a game was a mirage, by comparison with it anything else seemed futile. It was this internal tension which slowed the lightning artist down to a snail's pace in later years, and which accounted for the unbelievable outright blunders on the part of a man to whom chess combinations were as natural as talking.

His games always retained a flavor of their own. In the defense he was almost unparalleled; where others let the attack come on and then parried it, he smelled the threats, so to speak, while they were still no more than the gleam in the other fellow's eye, and so before his opponent could really get an offensive started, his position was smashed.

In the openings he relied on his intuition to the very last; no midnight oil for him, regardless of the benefits it conferred on others. Instead of

(Had [illegible] Modern Studies)

familiarizing himself with the latest theory before going to a tournament, he would draw his first four or five games, even against mediocre opponents and then, when he had absorbed all the novelties by watching the others produce them, he would really get started. The extra point or two he nonchalantly conceded in the early rounds were often regretted later.

When pressed, he could attack like a lion, but he never went out of his way to create positions where an attack was to the point. The ending was Capa's supreme forte; he tells us that some friends gave him a book on the endings when he was a boy; he liked them and read the book, the only one he ever looked at. His fondness for the endings remained; it is here that the passion for clarity is most frequently reflected.

Capablanca is and will always remain one of the really imposing figures in chess history. With his amazing intuition, his lightning vision, his keen mastery of the essentials, his numberless virtually faultless achievements, his name will be known and revered as long as chess is played.

No doubt there was a good psychological reason why he grew more and more fond of defensive play as he grew older. Perhaps he had more need to show that nobody was superior to him than to develop himself further. Here is the greatest defensive effort of his career, one of the immortal games.

CAPABLANCA MARSHALL

New York, 1918

Ruy Lopez

1	P–K4	P–K4
2	N–KB3	N–QB3

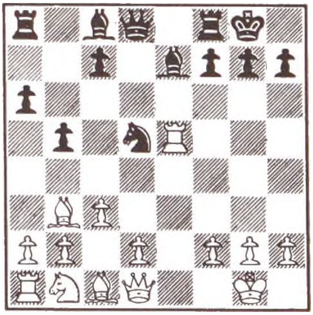
Marshall avoids his favorite Petroff, which might have led Capa to suspect that he was in for a prepared variation.

3	B–N5	P–QR3
4	B–R4	N–B3
5	O–O	B–K2
6	R–K1	P–QN4
7	B–N3	O–O
8	P–B3	P–Q4!

The Marshall variation.

9	PxP	NxP
10	NxP	NxN
11	RxN	

The question is: Is Black's attack worth a pawn? Subsequent analysis over the years has suggested various improvements for both sides, but neither the soundness nor the unsoundness of Marshall's sacrifice has ever been conclusively demonstrated.



11 . . . N–B3

Busted a

As a result of this game . . . P–B3 is played nowadays.

12 R–K1

Slightly more accurate is P–Q4 B–Q3 *13* R–K2.

12 . . . B–Q3
13 P–KR3 N–N5!
14 Q–B3!

14 PxN? would have led to disaster after *14* . . . Q–R5.

14 . . . Q–R5
15 P–Q4!

Intuitive and absolutely correct. The tempting R–K8? fails to *15* . . . B–N2!.

15 . . . NxP!
16 R–K2!

This is why the Rook would have done better to go to K2 immediately. *16* QxN? fails to . . . B–R7ch! *17* K–B1 B–N6 *18* QxPch RxQch!.

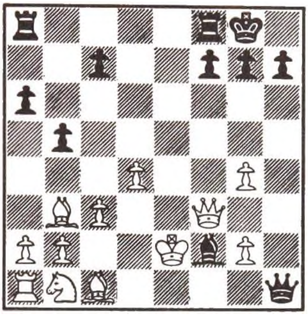
16 . . . B–N5

The best chance. If *16* . . . N–N5 *17* N–Q2 followed by N–B1 and Black's attack is dissipated.

17 PxB B–R7ch
18 K–B1 B–N6

An alternative was *18* . . . N–R8 *19* B–K3 N–N6ch *20* K–K1 NxR dis ch *21* KxN QR–K1 22 N–Q2, winning.

19 RxN Q–R8ch
20 K–K2 BxR



There is no good continuation for Black. If *20* . . . QxB *21* R–B1 QxPch 22 N–Q2 is decisive.

21 B–Q2 B–R5
22 Q–R3! QR–K1ch
23 K–Q3 Q–B8ch
24 K–B2 B–B7

Still hoping.

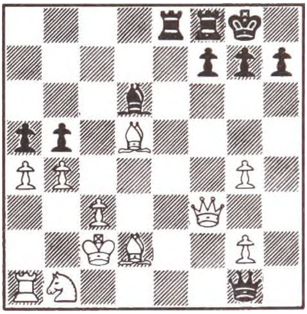
25 Q–B3 Q–N8

The game still does not look easy for White. True, he has two pieces for a Rook, but his Rook and Knight are immobilized, and it is not clear how he will develop them. Capa finds a way.

26 B–Q5! P–B4
27 PxP BxP
28 P–N4 B–Q3
29 P–R4!

Incredibly ingenious; the Rook enters the game via the Rook file.

29 . . . P–QR4

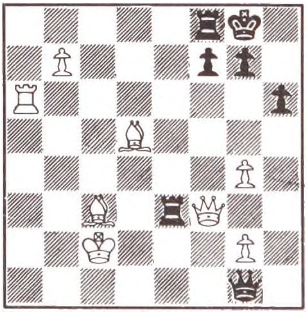


Fishing for what might come up.

30	PxNP	PxP
31	R–R6	PxP
32	NxP	

Suddenly White is fully developed, with a strong attack to boot.

32	. . .	B–N5
33	P–N6	BxN
34	BxB	P–R3
35	P–N7	R–K6



36	BxPch!	Resigns

White announced mate in six: 36 . . . RxB (if 36 . . . K–R1 37 RxP mate) 37 P–N8=Qch R–K1 38 QxRch K–R2 39 Q–K4ch R–B4 40 QxRch P–N3 41 QxP mate.

The games in which a champion gains the title are always among the most fascinating of his career, both psychologically and technically. Here is Capa's most famous win against Lasker.

LASKER CAPABLANCA

10th Match Game
Havana, 1921
Queen's Gambit Declined

1	P–Q4	P–Q4
2	P–QB4	P–K3
3	N–QB3	N–KB3
4	B–N5	B–K2
5	P–K3	O–O
6	N–B3	QN–Q2
7	Q–B2	P–B4

This move is so strong that 7 Q–B2 is today infrequently seen in master play. 7 R–B1 is preferred because it prevents . . . P–B4.

8	R–Q1	

After 8 PxQP NxP 9 BxB QxB 10 NxN PxN 11 PxP Black has an isolated QP; but repeated trials show that the ending is drawn.

8	. . .	Q–R4
9	B–Q3	

Better is 9 PxQP.

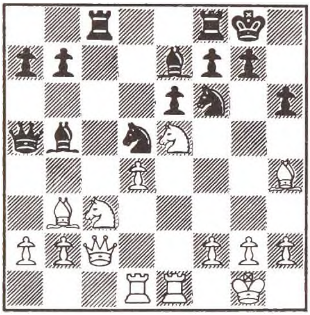
9	. . .	P–KR3
10	B–R4	BPxP
11	KPxP	PxP
12	BxP	N–N3

Securing Q4 for his Knight. The position is reminiscent of Steinitz.

13 B–QN3 B–Q2
14 O–O QR–B1
15 N–K5

Q–K2 immediately was preferable.

15 . . . B–N4
16 KR–K1 N(N3)–Q4



17 BxN(Q5)?

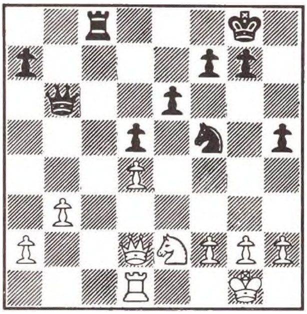
Breyer's celebrated analysis showed that White can draw by *17* BxN(B6); e.g., *17* . . . BxB *18* BxN PxB *19* Q–B5 B–B3 *20* N–N4 B–KN4 *21* P–B4 P–KN3 *22* Q–K5 KR–K1 *23* N–B6ch, etc.

17 . . . NxB
18 BxB NxB
19 Q–N3 B–B3
20 NxB PxN
21 R–K5 Q–N3
22 Q–B2 KR–Q1
23 N–K2 R–Q4
24 RxR

To save the QP. Lasker has suggested *24* R–K3, but then . . . N–B4 *25* R–QN3 Q–Q1 *26* R–N4 Q–Q2 *27* R–B4 P–K4 wins the QP.

24 . . . BPxR
25 Q–Q2 N–B4
26 P–QN3 P–KR4

26 . . . K–R2 was more precise.



27 P–KR3?

Missing his last drawing chance: *27* N–N3! NxN *28* RPxN R–B3 *29* Q–B4 R–B7 *30* R–Q2. From here on in Capa plays it to perfection.

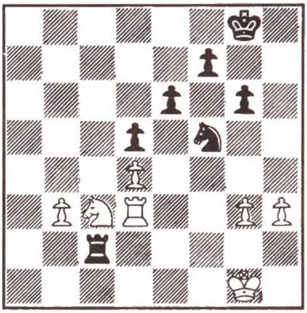
27 . . . P–R5!
28 Q–Q3 R–B3
29 K–B1 P–N3
30 Q–N1 Q–N5
31 K–N1 P–R4
32 Q–N2 P–R5
33 Q–Q2 QxQ
34 RxQ PxP
35 PxP R–N3
36 R–Q3 R–R3

Forcing an entry behind the pawn.

37 P–KN4

A desperate gamble.

37 . . .	PxP e.p.
38 PxP	R–R7
39 N–B3	R–QB7



The threat is . . . NxQP.

40 N–Q1	N–K2
41 N–K3	R–B8ch
42 K–B2	N–B3
43 N–Q1	R–N8

Avoiding a trap. If first 43 . . . N–N5 44 R–Q2 R–N8 45 N–N2! RxN? 46 RxR N–Q6ch 47 K–K2 NxR 48 K–Q2 only draws because Black's N is trapped.

44 K–K2

Or 44 K–K1 N–R4.

44 . . .	RxP!
45 K–K3	R–N5
46 N–B3	N–K2
47 N–K2	N–B4ch
48 K–B2	P–N4
49 P–N4	N–Q3
50 N–N1	N–K5ch
51 K–B1	R–N8ch
52 K–N2	R–N7ch
53 K–B1	R–B7ch
54 K–K1	R–QR7
55 K–B1	K–N2

White is in virtual zugzwang. Once the Black King enters the picture it will be all over.

56 R–K3	K–N3
57 R–Q3	P–B3
58 R–K3	K–B2
59 R–Q3	K–K2
60 R–K3	K–Q3
61 R–Q3	R–B7ch
62 K–K1	R–KN7
63 K–B1	R–QR7
64 R–K3	P–K4
65 R–Q3	PxP
66 RxP	K–B4
67 R–Q1	P–Q5
68 R–B1ch	K–Q4
Resigns	

He is helpless against the advance of the Black QP.

Three years after the world championship match, Capa and Lasker met again, in the New York Tournament of 1924; Lasker won first prize, but Capa had the satisfaction of again defeating him in their individual encounter.

CAPABLANCA LASKER

New York, 1924

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 P–Q4	N–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–B3
3 N–QB3	P–Q4
4 PxP	

Capa always preferred simplicity.

4 . . .	PxP
5 N–B3	N–B3
6 B–B4	P–K3

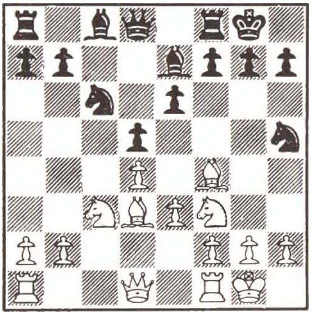
The safest.

7 P–K3	B–K2

7 . . . B–Q3 equalizes more easily.

8 B–Q3	O–O
9 O–O	N–KR4

Many years later Botvinnik played the obvious 9 P–KR3 to avoid this maneuver.



10 B–K5	P–B4

More consistent is . . . P–B3, to force the immediate exchange.

11 R–B1	N–B3
12 BxN	PxB!
13 N–KR4	K–R1
14 P–B4	R–KN1
15 R–B3	B–Q2
16 R–R3	

An idle threat. He soon returns to the main idea.

16 . . .	B–K1
17 P–R3	R–N2
18 R–N3	RxR
19 PxR	R–B1
20 K–B2	N–R4
21 Q–B3?	

Inexact. Q–K2 was better.

21 . . .	N–B5

Attacking the KP.

22 Q–K2	N–Q3

Both sides have completed their development, and a battle royal is shaping up. Black will attack on the Q-side, White on the K-side.

23 R–KR1	N–K5ch?

A mistake which allows a promising sacrifice. Correct was first 23 . . . B–B2, and if 24 P–KN4 N–K5ch 25 BxN BPxB and White's Queen does not reach the K-side.

24 BxN	BPxB
25 Q–N4	P–B4
26 NxBP!	PxN
27 QxP	P–KR4
28 P–KN4	

28 NxQP R–B7ch is inferior.

28 . . .	R–B3
29 P–N5?	

But here, as Alekhine later showed, 29 NxQP would have won; e.g., 29 . . . R–B7ch 30 K–N3; or 29 . . . B–R5ch 30 P–N3 R–B7ch 31 K–N1 BxP 32 Q–B8ch.

29 . . .	K–N1?

And now Lasker, in his turn, suffers from the fatal illusion that he can win. Better was 29 . . . R–Q3.

30 NxQP B–B2
31 NxBch QxN
32 P–KN4

White has acquired three pawns for the piece and still retains a strong attack after the smoke has cleared. Both sides, however, were under the impression that they ought to win.

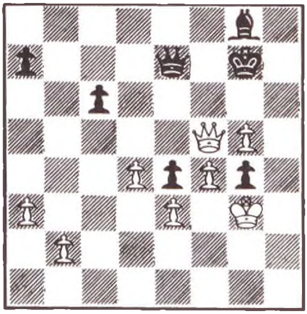
32 . . . PxP

With 32 . . . R–B7ch 33 K–N3 R–K7 34 P–N6 P–R5ch! he has an easy draw, but he still hopes to do better.

33 Q–R7ch K–B1
34 R–R6 B–N1

34 . . . RxR was simpler.

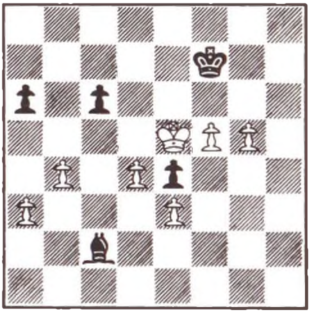
35 Q–B5ch K–N2
36 RxR PxR
37 K–N3



37 . . . Q–K3?

The decisive mistake. 37 . . . B–B2! still draws.

38 KxP! QxQch
39 KxQ B–Q4
40 P–N4 P–R3
41 K–N4! B–B5
42 P–B5 B–N6
43 K–B4 B–B7
44 K–K5 K–B2



45 P–R4!! K–N2

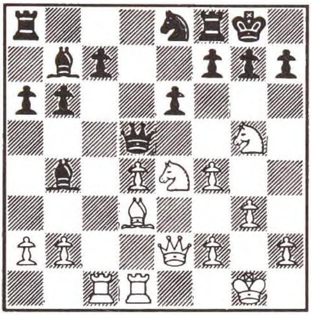
After 45 . . . BxP 46 KxP the 3 passed pawns decide.

46 P–Q5! BxP
47 P–Q6 P–B4
48 PxP B–B3
49 K–K6 P–R4
50 P–B6ch Resigns

A magnificent fighting game.

Capa's games are full of delightful surprises. Here is a choice selection.

Becker



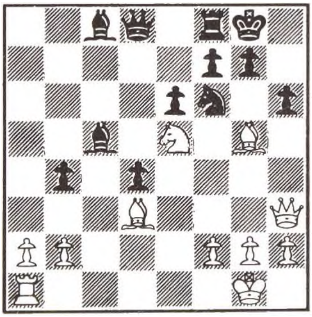
Capablanca—TO PLAY

Carlsbad, 1929

1 NxRP!	P–KB4
2 N(R7)–N5!!	Resigns

For there is no parrying the double threat of B–B4 and Q–R5. If 2 . . . PxN 3 B–B4 or 2 . . . Q–Q2 3 Q–R5 N–B3 4 NxNch PxN 5 Q–N6ch K–R1 6 NxP QxN 7 RxP, etc.

Levenfish



Capablanca—TO PLAY

Moscow, 1935

1 N–N4!	B–K2
2 BxN!	PxB

Not 2 . . . BxB 3 NxPch PxN 4 QxRP R–K1 5 B–R7ch, with mate to follow soon.

3 NxRPch	K–N2
4 Q–N4ch!	K–R1

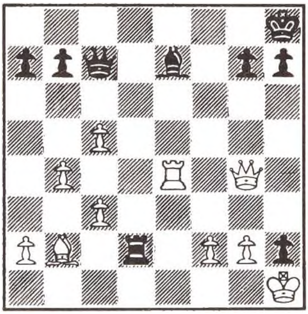
If . . . KxN 5 Q–R4ch and mate next.

5 Q–R5	K–N2
6 NxP	R–R1

Or . . . RxN 7 Q–R7ch K–B1 8 Q–R8 mate.

7 Q–N6ch	Resigns

Spielmann



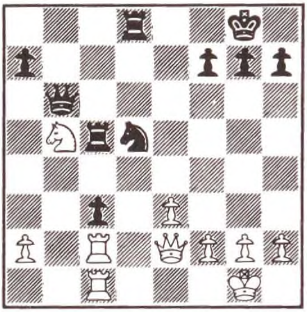
Capablanca—TO PLAY

San Sebastian, 1911

1 B–B1	RxBP
2 B–B4	Q–Q1
3 RxB!	Q–KB1
4 QxPch	QxQ
5 R–K8ch	Q–N1

6 B–K5ch and mate next move.

Capablanca



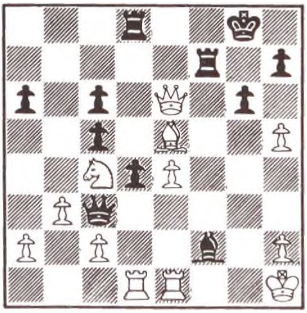
Bernstein—TO PLAY

St. Petersburg, 1914

1 NxBP NxN
2 RxN RxR
3 RxR Q–N7!

Not . . . Q–N8ch 4 Q–B1 R–Q8 5 R–B8ch!.
White Resigns—for he must lose at least a Rook.

Marshall

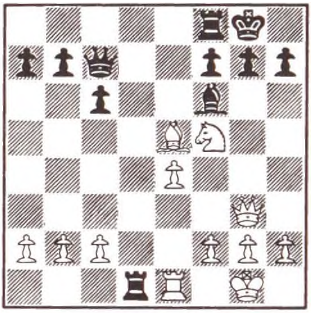


Capablanca—TO PLAY

8th Match Game, 1909

1 R–K3!! QxBP
2 KR–Q3 Q–K7
3 N–Q6 RxN
4 BxR B–K8
5 Q–K8ch K–N2
6 P–R6ch Resigns

Tenerov



Capablanca—TO PLAY

New York, 1910?

1 RxR BxB

If . . . QxB 2 N–R6ch still wins.

2 N–R6ch K–R1
3 QxB! QxQ
4 NxPch Resigns

Richard Reti and the Hypermodern School

The most persuasive exponent of the hypermodern school was the Czech Richard Reti. Although he never was a serious challenger to Capablanca, he was invariably a high-prize winner throughout the 1920s.

The chess world suffered a great loss when he died at a relatively early age in 1930.

The hypermodern school was essentially a revolt against the rigid formalism of Tarrasch and his followers. Tarrasch, although a great man in his day, became rather pompous and authoritarian in his later years and expected everybody to recognize him as the man who had solved all the theoretical problems of chess. The hypermoderns rebelled against both the man and his ideas.

Tarrasch had a simplified version of chess theory. White *must* open with P–K4 or P–Q4; whoever occupies the center and develops most quickly gets the better game. Not so, said the hypermoderns. It is not the *occupation* of the center per se that counts, it is *control*. In fact, it is often disadvantageous to occupy the center too soon because the occupation will shortly be challenged and the result will be a collection of weaknesses, they contended. "After 1 P–K4 White's game is in its last throes," cried Breyer with typical hypermodern exuberance and exaggeration.

Since control is better than occupation, the hypermoderns reasoned, flank development is better than central. Hence all the fianchetto variations sprang up, for both White and Black, which constitute so much of the modern master's repertoire.

Development, the hypermoderns continued, need not be forced too soon, as the older masters had taught. In fact, chess was just too complicated for simple rules. The one rule that they preferred was: The opening must be treated as though it were a middlegame. By this they meant that every opening move must fit into some well-conceived plan and that the pawn formation must be played with a view to the endgame.

This revolution enriched chess immensely. But it went too far. For the old rule *always occupy the center*, it substituted a new one, *never occupy the center*. Reti tried to see in chess a larger struggle between opposing world ideas. He wrote in 1929: "Today we see in chess the fight of aspiring Americanism against the old European intellectual life: a struggle between the technique of Capablanca, a virtuoso in whose play one can find nothing tangible to object to, and between great European masters, all of them artists, who have the qualities as well as the faults of artists in their treatment of the subject to which they devote their lives: they experimentalise and in striving after what is deep down, they overlook what is near at hand." This crude attack against American "materialism," reminiscent of the 1920s, is hardly taken seriously today. But even if it were, what Reti forgot is that chess is a game and that the ultimate decision lies not in speculation, but in over-the-board calculation and trial. For that reason general principles can never have the same importance in chess as in other art forms. It is not, we now know, either control of the center or occupation of the center; it depends on the position. In some cases control is better, in others it is not. The ultimate test lies in variations, not in theory. This is our attitude today. But, had it not been for the hypermodern revolt, chess would not have advanced beyond the old formalism to the healthy eclecticism which characterizes it today.

Throughout the 1920s Reti was a consistent high-prize winner, though he never quite reached the class of the world champions. Here is a game of immense historical importance, in which he showed how effective his new opening could be against one of the old-timers.

RETI **RUBINSTEIN**

Carlsbad, 1923

Reti's Opening

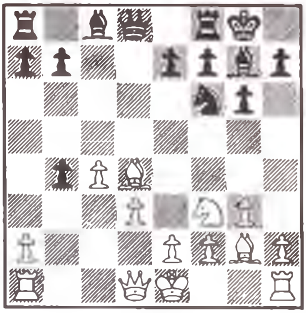
1 **N–KB3** **P–Q4**
2 **P–KN3** **N–KB3**
3 **B–N2** **P–KN3**
4 **P–B4** **P–Q5**

4 . . . P–B3 was better.

5 **P–Q3** **B–N2**
6 **P–QN4!** **O–O**
7 **QN–Q2**

Note that Black has occupied the center with a pawn; White proceeds to undermine and attack it.

7 . . . **P–B4**
8 **N–N3** **PxP**
9 **B–N2** **N–B3**
10 **QNxP** **NxN**
11 **BxN**



The outcome of the opening is curious.

Actually White has the better of it because he will now be able to occupy the center with his pawns! Thus the result of the opening leads to the hypermodern paradox: if you occupy the center immediately, the pawns soon become weakened, and the opponent will then be able to occupy it. This means though that it is not occupation that is bad; it is in many cases *immediate occupation*. Super reverse Benko

11 . . . **P–N3**
12 **P–QR3** **B–N2**
13 **B–N2** **PxP**
14 **RxP** **Q–B2**
15 **Q–R1**

Kmoch writes: "One may confidently assert that Reti did not discover this move, he invented it!"

15 . . . **N–K1**
16 **BxB** **NxB**
17 **O–O**

At last! The older masters were always horrified by the lack of precautions the hypermoderns took to defend the King.

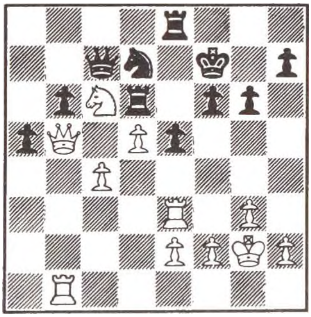
17 . . . N–K3

The RP cannot be taken because the Queen goes: *18* RxP? RxR *19* QxR R–R1.

18 R–N1 B–B3
19 P–Q4! B–K5
20 R–Q1 P–QR4
21 P–Q5 N–B4
22 N–Q4 BxB
23 KxB KR–Q1
24 N–B6 R–Q3
25 R–K3 R–K1
26 Q–K5 P–B3
27 Q–N2 P–K4

Reti has been hoping to provoke this move, for now the position of the N is secure. The next step is to concentrate on the NP.

28 Q–N5! K–B2
29 R–QN1 N–Q2



30 P–B3 R–QB1

Threatening . . . N–N1.

31 R–Q3!

To meet . . . N–N1 with P–B5.

31 . . . P–K5

A desperate liberation attempt.

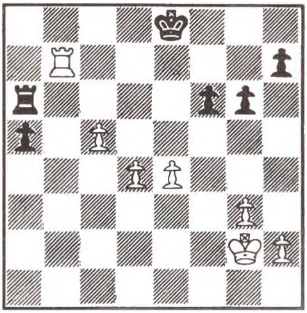
32 PxP N–K4
33 QxNP!!

Of course. With so many pawns for the piece the win is easy.

33 . . . NxN
34 P–B5!!

The concluding process is most elegant.

34 . . . R–Q2
35 PxN RxR
36 QxQch RxQ
37 PxR RxP
38 R–N7ch K–K1
39 P–Q4 R–R3



40 R–N6!!!

A problemlike theme.

40 . . . R–R1

After *40* . . . RxR *41* PxR K–Q2 *42* P–K5 P–R5 *43* P–K6ch, White queens first.

41 RxP P–R5
42 R–B2 P–R6
43 R–R2 K–Q2

44	P–Q5	P–N4
45	K–B3	R–R5
46	K–K3	P–R4
47	P–R4	PxP
48	PxP	K–K2
49	K–B4	K–Q2
50	K–B5	Resigns

One of the earliest triumphs of hypermodernism.

The year after the above game was played, at New York, Reti produced some classic gems with his opening, which people were now coming to take seriously. When he beat Capablanca people sat up and took notice!

RETI **CAPABLANCA**

New York, 1924
Reti's Opening

1	N–KB3	N–KB3
2	P–B4	P–KN3
3	P–QN4	B–N2
4	B–N2	O–O
5	P–N3	P–N3

Alekhine writes: "Capablanca treats the opening simply as well as soundly and, after a few moves, obtains a perfectly even position."

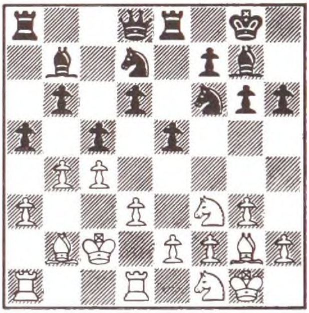
6	B–N2	B–N2
7	O–O	P–Q3
8	P–Q3	

But Reti sticks too closely to his principles. After *8* P–Q4, I would prefer White.

8	. . .	QN–Q2
9	QN–Q2	P–K4
10	Q–B2	R–K1
11	KR–Q1	P–QR4
12	P–QR3	P–R3

Stalling for time.

13	N–B1	P–B4



14	P–N5	N–B1
15	P–K3	Q–B2

Preparing the break with P–Q4.

16	P–Q4	B–K5
17	Q–B3	

Better was Q–B1.

17	. . .	KPxP
18	PxP	N(B3)–Q2?

A miscalculation. After *18* . . . N–K3! *19* PxP QPxP *20* Q–B1 is necessary, when Black's game is adequate.

19	Q–Q2	PxP

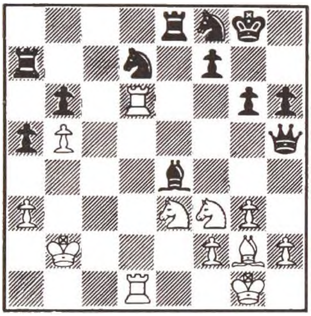
Simpler was . . . QR–Q1.

20	BxP	QxP
21	BxB	KxB

22	Q–N2ch	K–N1
23	RxP	

Not 23 N–Q2 Q–B7.

23	. . .	Q–B4
24	QR–Q1	R–R2
25	N–K3	Q–R4



A typical mid-game position of Reti's Opening. The center is liquidated, and White's pieces are all in commanding positions, which gives him a winning attack.

26	N–Q4	BxB
27	KxB	Q–K4

There are many pretty combinations afloat: if 27 . . . RxN 28 PxR QxR 29 N–B5! wins.

28	N–B4	Q–QB4
29	N–B6	R–B2
30	N–K3	

Threatening N–Q5.

30	. . .	N–K4
31	R(Q1)–Q5	Resigns

While his victory over Capa was a great personal triumph for Reti, his win against Bogolyubov in the same tournament is one of the most beautiful games on record. It was rightly awarded the first brilliancy prize.

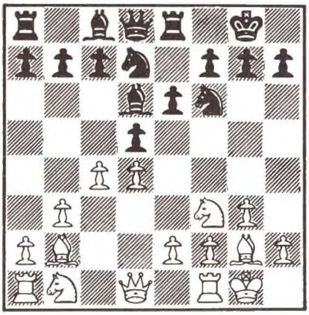
RETI **BOGOLYUBOV**

New York, 1924

Reti's Opening

1	N–KB3	N–KB3
2	P–B4	P–K3
3	P–KN3	P–Q4
4	B–N2	B–Q3
5	O–O	O–O
6	P–N3	R–K1
7	B–N2	QN–Q2
8	P–Q4!	

In a real sense the decisive move; Black is now strategically lost!



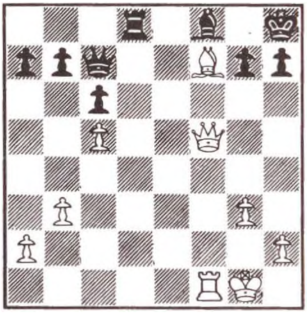
8	. . .	P–B3
9	QN–Q2	N–K5
10	NxN	PxN
11	N–K5	P–KB4
12	P–B3	PxP
13	BxP!	Q–B2
14	NxN	BxN
15	P–K4	P–K4

Black struggles to free himself.

16	P–B5	B–KB1
17	Q–B2	PxQP
18	PxP	QR–Q1
19	B–R5	R–K4
20	BxP	RxKBP

Leading to a brilliant finish; but . . . R–Q4 *21* QR–Q1 is equally hopeless.

21	RxR	BxR
22	QxB	RxB
23	R–KB1	R–Q1
24	B–B7ch	K–R1

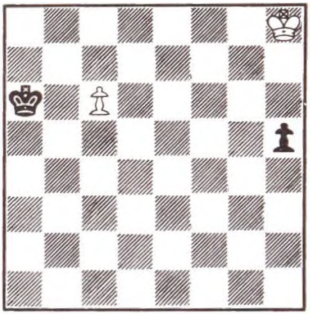


25	B–K8!!!!	Resigns

There is no defense. If 25 . . . BxPch 26 QxB RxB 27 R–B8 and mate next; while if 25 . . . B–K2 26 Q–B8 and mates.

Reti was above all an artist of the chessboard. He was a problem and endgame composer of the first rank, and in his games this love for beauty crops up again and again. Here are a few of his *chef d'oeuvres*.

STUDY BY *Reti*

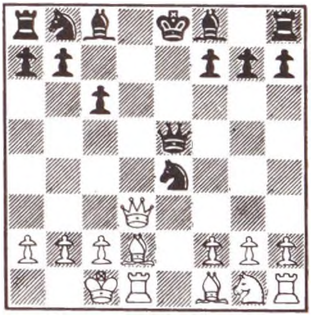


WHITE TO PLAY AND DRAW

1	K–N7	P–R5
2	K–B6	P–R6
3	K–K6	P–R7
4	P–B7	K–N2
5	K–Q7	P–R8=Q
6	P–B8=Qch	

With perpetual check.

Tartakower

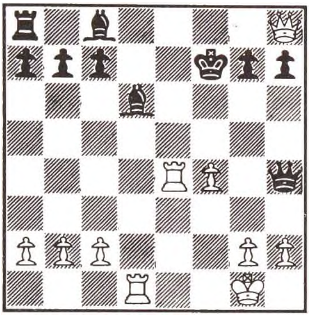


Reti—TO PLAY

Vienna, 1910

1	Q–Q8ch	KxQ
2	B–N5ch	K–B2
3	B–Q8 mate	

Reti—TO PLAY



Euwe

Match: Amsterdam, 1922

1	. . .	B–KR6!
2	QxR	B–B4ch
3	K–R1	BxPch
4	KxB	Q–N5ch
	Resigns	

Aron Nimzovich

The greatest player of the hypermodern school was Aron Nimzovich. Born in Riga in 1886, he learned the game from his father, who was a player of considerable ability. By 1906, only twenty, he was already a master of some repute. In Russia, even then the home of many a renowned figure in the chess world, he soon became one of the leading lights. In 1914 he tied with Alekhine in the elimination rounds to decide admission to the St. Petersburg grandmasters' tournament. Thus he was a finished master long before the First World War, but it was not until the 1920s that he was recognized as a potential world champion.

During his prewar period Nimzovich began elaborating the ideas which were later incorporated into his monumental work, *My System.* He wrote a few articles opposing Tarrasch, which earned him much ridicule. As long as Nimzovich was not too well known, people agreed with Tarrasch and said of him: "a law unto himself," "goes his own way, one, however, not to be recommended to the public," "mysterious." It was not until much later that the profundity of his ideas came to be appreciated.

After the war, Nimzovich emigrated to Denmark, where he made his home until his untimelv death in 1935. At first he played very little, apparently because he was suffering from ideas of persecution. Whenever he visited a restaurant, he switched the cups around for fear that he was being poisoned.

These persecutory notions eventually disappeared, or at any rate became manageable, and bv 1925 he was back in the international arena. For about six or seven years his record was most impressive; his greatest success came at Carlsbad, 1929, where he finished ahead of everybody except Alekhine, who went through the tournament as chief kibitzer.

But he remained extremely nervous and was given to bizarre behavior. Smoking irritated him, and there were many stories of how annoyed he became, even though the masters knew that it bothered him and generally refrained. During one of his games with Vidmar in the New York 1927 Tournament, the latter absent-mindedly took out his cigarette case. Nimzovich rushed up to Maroczy, the tournament director, and protested. "But," countered Maroczy, "he is not smoking." "You are a chessmaster," roared Nimzovich; "and you must know that the threat is much stronger than the execution!" Opocensky once told me of another amusing incident. In one of their games, Opocensky wanted to smoke and walked a good distance from the board to light a cigar; he stood there for a few minutes looking at the position when suddenly Nimzovich jumped up and shouted: "Stop shaking your belly!"

Many other eccentricities are reported of him. At one time a doctor ordered him to do calisthenics; he began to do them in the tournament room. During a particularly difficult situation once, he went to a corner and stood on his head!

Were it not for these unfortunate aberrations, Nimzovich might well have become world champion. He had the ability, but he lacked the stamina and cold-bloodedness which is a requisite for any title holder.

For many years Nimzovich labored over his book, which finally appeared in the late 1920s as *My System*. The title is really a misnomer, since what he had was not a system, but a collection of insights. Still it is revealing of the man—he had to have the feeling that he was revolutionizing chess from top to bottom. The need to prove his theories sometimes proved costly in tournaments and was another factor which kept him from the chess title crown.

Nimzovich's wizardry was most evident in so-called close positions when he made moves which were termed "mysterious." Here is a classic which has become famous as the "Immortal Zugzwang Game."

SAMISCH	NIMZOVICH

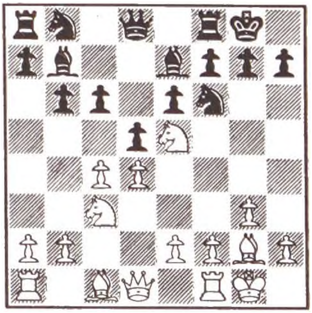
Copenhagen, 1923

Queen's Indian Defense

1	P–Q4	N–KB3
2	P–QB4	P–K3
3	N–KB3	P–QN3
4	P–KN3	B–N2
5	B–N2	B–K2
6	N–QB3	O–O
7	O–O	P–Q4

Now a standard opening, but then radically new. . . . N–K5 equalizes now.

8 N–K5 **P–B3**



9 PxP?

Completely antipositional. Few masters would be guilty of it today. 9 P–K4 or P–N3 is much stronger.

9 . . . BPxP
10 B–B4 P–QR3
11 R–B1 P–QN4
12 Q–N3?

Another positional error. White is obviously lost in this hypermodern maneuvering. A plausible idea was 12 N–Q3, followed by P–QN4 and N–B5.

12 . . . N–B3
13 NxN BxN
14 P–KR3 Q–Q2
15 K–R2 N–R4
16 B–Q2 P–B4

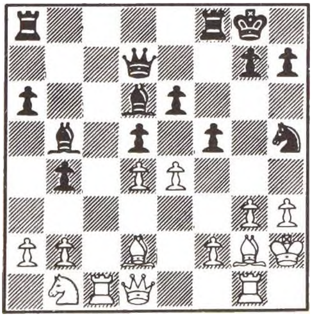
Initiating the K-side attack.

17 Q–Q1 P–N5!
18 N–N1

Slowly White is driven back.

18 . . . B–QN4
19 R–N1 B–Q3!
20 P–K4?

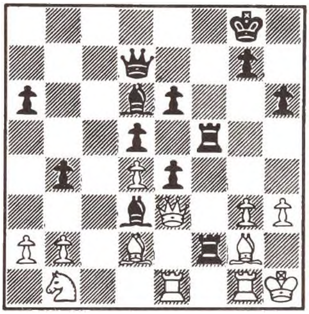
A miscalculation in a difficult position.



20 . . . BPxP!!
21 QxN RxP
22 Q–N5 QR–KB1
23 K–R1 R(B1)–B4
24 Q–K3 B–Q6!

Threatening . . . R–K7.

25 QR–K1 P–R3!!!
Resigns



The most remarkable winning move on record. White is in literal "zugzwang" or move-compulsion—i.e., there is no direct threat, but any move that he makes loses. Here are the main possibilities:

I. 26 R–KB1 BxR.
II. 26 R–Q1 R–K7 winning the Queen.
III. 26 P–N4 R(B4)–B6 27 BxR R–R7 mate.
IV. 26 P–N3 P–R4 and the zugzwang continues.

The older generation had a hard time puzzling out Nimzovich's "peculiar" moves. Here is another victory for his new ideas.

NIMZOVICH RUBINSTEIN

Dresden, 1926

English Opening

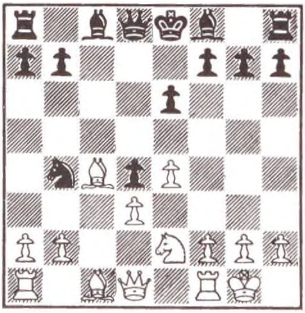
1 P–QB4 P–QB4
2 N–KB3 N–KB3
3 N–B3 P–Q4
4 PxP NxP
5 P–K4! N–N5

Preferable was 5 . . . NxN, but Black may have been under the illusion that 6 P–Q3 was now forced, since classical dogma taught that the King must never be moved in the opening.

6 B–B4! P–K3

Now he rightly sees that 6 . . . N–Q6ch 7 K–K2 N–B5ch 8 K–B1 gets him nowhere.

7 O–O N(N1)–B3
8 P–Q3 N–Q5
9 NxN PxN
10 N–K2

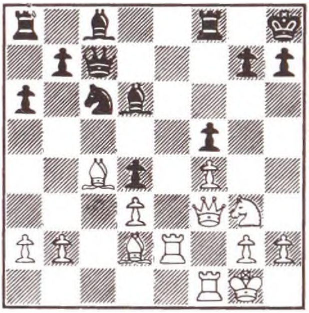


Again Rubinstein has a centrally located pawn which proves to be his undoing. (See his game against Reti.)

10 . . . P–QR3
11 N–N3 B–Q3
12 P–B4

Q–N4 was a strong alternative.

12 . . . O–O
13 Q–B3 K–R1
14 B–Q2 P–B4
15 QR–K1 N–B3
16 R–K2 Q–B2
17 PxP PxP



White's position is somewhat freer, but how should he continue? Nimzovich has a brilliant inspiration.

18 N–R1!!

Beginning the long journey to KN5.

18 . . . B–Q2
19 N–B2 QR–K1
20 KR–K1 RxR
21 RxR N–Q1

If 21 . . . R–K1 22 Q–Q5! is decisive.

22 N–R3 B–B3
23 Q–R5 P–KN3

24 Q–R4 K–N2
25 Q–B2!

The genius of the hypermoderns lay in their ability to pull an attack out of what the older masters had thought of as "barren" positions.

25 . . . B–B4
26 P–QN4 B–N3
27 Q–R4

Threatening to win everything.

27 . . . R–K1
28 R–K5! N–B2

If *28 . . .* P–R3 *29* P–N4!.

29 BxN QxB
30 N–N5 Q–N1
31 RxR BxR
32 Q–K1!

Nimzovich says here: "Black is lost. In spite of the scanty material a mating attack is in the air."

32 . . . B–B3
33 Q–K7ch K–R1
34 P–N5! Q–N2

If instead *34 . . .* PxP (or *34 . . .* BxP) *35* B–N4, followed by B–Q6. *34 . . .* B–Q1 fails against N–B7ch.

35 QxQch KxQ
36 PxB Resigns

Although he has become famous for his handling of close positions, Nimzovich was a tactical genius of the first order. Here is one of his most pleasing victories.

NIMZOVICH STOLTZ

Stockholm, 1934

Queen's Gambit Declined

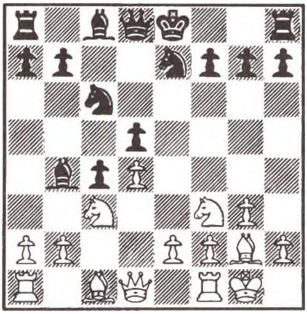
1 P–QB4 P–K3
2 N–QB3 P–Q4
3 P–Q4 P–QB4
4 BPxP KPxP
5 N–B3 N–QB3
6 P–KN3 P–B5

The Folkestone variation, which the Swedish team popularized at the international tournament at Folkestone in 1933.

7 B–N2

P–K4 at once is even stronger.

7 . . . B–QN5
8 O–O KN–K2



9 P–K4! PxP

Forced.

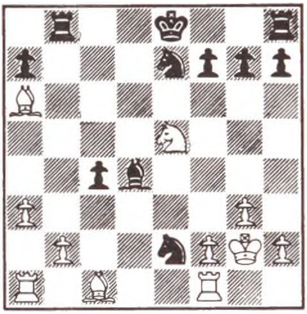
10 NxP B–KB4
11 N–K5! QxP

The alternative *11 . . .* NxN *12* PxN N–B3 *13* N–Q6ch was no better.

12 QxQ	NxQ
13 P–QR3!	BxN

If the Bishop moves, *13* . . . B–R4 *14* N–Q6ch is fatal.

14 BxB	B–B4
15 BxNP	QR–N1
16 B–QR6	N–K7ch
17 K–N2	B–Q5



18 NxKBP!!

A beautiful winning move. Of course if . . . KxN *19* BxPch and *20* BxN.

18 . . .	NxB
19 NxR	N–N6
20 QR–Q1	P–N3

Apparently winning the Knight—

21 N–B7!!

Back again.

21 . . .	KxN
22 BxPch	K–B1
23 BxN	BxNP
24 R–Q3	BxP
25 R–B3ch	K–N2

The game can now be won in a variety of ways, but Nimzovich concludes with a pretty mating attack.

26 R–QR1	B–B4
27 R–B7ch	K–R3
28 R–R5!	B–N3
29 R–R4	

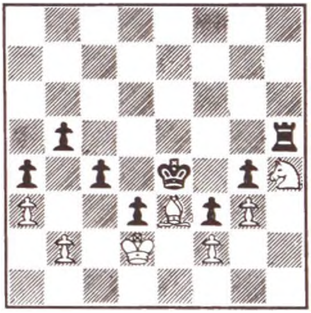
Threatening mate in two.

29 . . .	N–B4
30 B–K6	N–Q5
31 B–Q7	Resigns

Nimzovich gives this probable variation: *31* . . . R–N2 *32* P–N4 N–N6 *33* P–N5ch! KxP *34* R–N4ch K–R3 *35* R–R4ch K–N4 *36* P–B4ch and mate next.

Here are some more pleasing Nimzovich melodies.

Nimzovich—TO PLAY



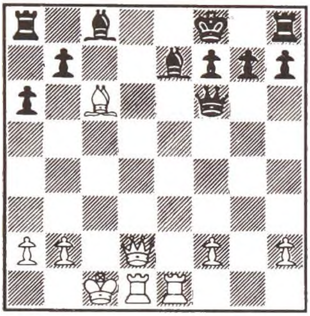
Lund

Oslo, 1921

1 . . .	P–N5
2 PxP	RxN
3 PxR	P–N6
4 PxP	P–B6ch
5 PxP	P–R6

White resigns—all his moves were forced.

Alapin

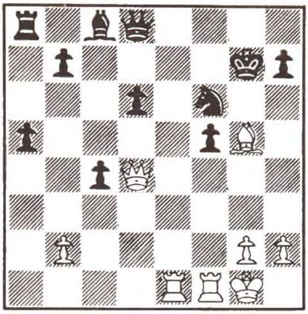


Nimzovich—TO PLAY

Riga, 1913

1 Q–Q8ch! BxQ
2 R–K8 mate

Marshall



Nimzovich—TO PLAY

New York, 1927

1 R–K8! QxR
2 QxNch K–N1
3 B–R6 Resigns

Carlos Torre

Although the Latin countries were the leaders of the chess world in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in our times they have produced few great masters. The most notable exceptions are of course Morphy and Capablanca. Another master of Latin origin who might have become world champion had his health held out was the Mexican, Carlos Torre. Born in Mexico in 1904, he moved to New Orleans, the home of Morphy, at an early age and later to New York. In New York he quickly became one of the leading American masters. By 1925 he was sufficiently well known to be invited to a number of European tournaments, where he showed the greatest of promise. Unfortunately he suffered a nervous breakdown a year later and had to retire from chess. From time to time there have been rumors of his recovery, but he has never been well enough to return to the game he loved and enriched.

I met Torre in Monterey, Mexico, in 1934, where two exhibition games were arranged. He was still very nervous and withdrawn and warned me not to spend too much money; aside from this, he was generally rather disinterested in what was going on. In the games he was no longer the old Torre.

In his heyday Torre was one of the bright lights of an era which produced few masters of promise. One of his most celebrated victories is the game in which he defeated Emanuel Lasker, a game played on Torre's twenty-first birthday.

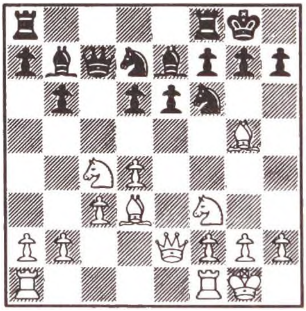
TORRE LASKER

Moscow, 1925
Queen's Pawn Game

1	P–Q4	N–KB3
2	N–KB3	P–K3
3	B–N5	P–B4
4	P–K3	PxP

A poor idea. Black should continue with . . . Q–N3 at an early stage.

5	PxP	B–K2
6	QN–Q2	P–Q3
7	B–Q3	QN–Q2
8	P–B3	P–QN3
9	N–B4	B–N2
10	Q–K2	Q–B2
11	O–O	O–O



The great Lasker has been outplayed in the opening. White's pieces are freer and he has a strong initiative.

12	KR–K1	KR–K1
13	QR–Q1	N–B1
14	B–B1!	N–Q4
15	N–N5	

Both sides are maneuvering to find a weakness in the enemy camp.

15	. . .	P–N4
16	N–R3	P–N5
17	PxP	NxP
18	Q–R5!	

A bold idea, though 18 B–N1 was also possible.

18	. . .	BxN
19	BxB	NxB
20	RxN	Q–R4

Black is threatening P–KR3 or P–B3.

21 P–QN4!

Seizing the opportunity to complicate the position.

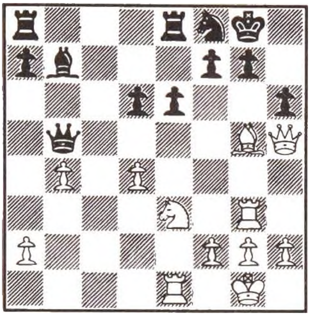
21	. . .	Q–KB4

Lasker is playing for a win against the relatively unknown Torre. With 21 . . . QxP a probable draw results after 22 R–N1 Q–R4 23 N–B4 Q–R3 24 RxB QxR 25 NxP Q–N8ch 26 R–Q1 Q–N3.

22	R–KN3	P–KR3
23	N–B4	Q–Q4?

A mistake. Correct was 23 . . . PxB 24 NxP Q–N3!, when White regains the piece, but the endgame is drawn.

24	N–K3	Q–N4



25 B–B6!!

Surprise decision.

25	. . .	QxQ
26	RxPch	K–R1
27	RxP dis ch	K–N1
28	R–N7ch	K–R1
29	RxB dis ch	K–N1
30	R–N7ch	K–R1
31	R–N5 dis ch	K–R2
32	RxQ	K–N3
33	R–R3	KxB
34	RxPch	K–N4
35	R–R3	

Torre has eaten his fill (in Spanish a colloquial expression for taking a piece is "comer"—to eat a piece). The rest is obvious.

35	. . .	R(K1)–N1
36	R–N3ch	K–B3
37	R–B3ch	K–N3
38	P–QR3	P–R4
39	PxP	RxP
40	N–B4	R–Q4
41	R–B4	N–Q2
42	RxPch	K–N4
43	P–N3	Resigns

Ernst Gruenfeld

Another prominent star of the twenties was the Viennese, Ernst Gruenfeld. He stands out particularly as one of the great theoreticians of chess history. His knowledge of opening variations was simply fantastic; he knew more than any half dozen of his colleagues put together. Such encyclopedic knowledge has both good and bad features. In the early days he used it to produce vigorous games; later he became too easily contented with colorless draws. Here is a beautiful win from the earlier years.

GRUENFELD BOGOLYUBOV

Vienna, 1922

Blumenfeld Counter Gambit

1	P–Q4	N–KB3
2	N–KB3	P–K3
3	P–B4	P–B4
4	P–Q5	P–QN4

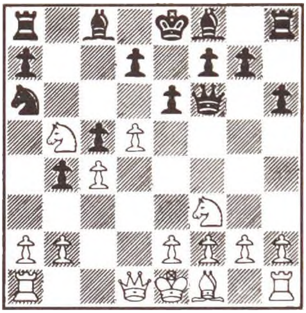
A gambit which was very popular in this tournament.

5 B–N5

This is the refutation. If instead 5 PxKP BPxP 6 PxP P–Q4 Black gets a strong attack for the pawn.

5	. . .	P–KR3 – Na5
6	BxN	QxB
7	N–B3	P–N5
8	N–N5!	N–R3

Forced.

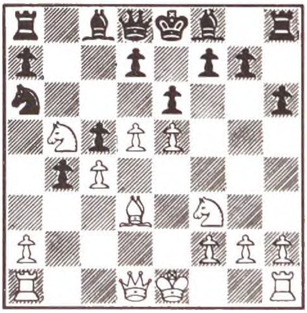


Gruenfeld now has a considerable advantage in development, which calls for a quick attack.

9 P–K4! QxNP?

This loses. Black's best bet was . . . P–K4.

10 B–Q3 Q–B3
11 P–K5 Q–Q1



12 PxP!

Surprisingly effective.

12 . . . QPxP
13 B–K4! QxQch

No better is *13* . . . R–N1 *14* QxQch KxQ *15* O–O–Och.

14 RxQ R–QN1
15 B–B6ch K–K2
16 NxP P–N4

A last gasp.

17 B–N5!

Decisive. If now *17* . . . B–QN2 *18* BxN BxB *19* N–B6ch wins. Bogolyubov prefers to allow mate.

17 . . . B–KN2
18 N–B6ch K–B1
19 R–Q8 mate

Rudolf Spielmann

Another master who began his chess career before the First World War and rose to prominence in the Capablanca era was the Viennese, Rudolf Spielmann. He was renowned mainly for his great tactical ability; the sacrifice he loved as nothing else. In his book, *The Art of Sacrifice in Chess*, he brings out much of his personality. He writes:

> The beauty of a game of chess is usually assessed, and not without good reason, according to the sacrifices it contains. Sacrifice—that is

a hallowed, a heroic thought! The individual comes forward in a spirit of chivalry and immolates himself as did Winkelried in the battle of Sempach.

Sacrifice for an idea calls forth in us homage and admiration even where the idea in itself may not meet with our full approval. In chess, which we like to see as a counterpart of life, a sacrifice raises similar feelings in us. We are inclined, subconsciously, to rate a sacrificial combination more highly than positional play. We instinctively place the moral value above the scientific. We honor Capablanca, but our hearts beat faster at the mention of the name of Morphy. The magic of the sacrifice grips us and we care nothing for extraneous circumstances, whether Morphy's opponents were less strong than Capablanca's, how Morphy would fare today, how Capablanca would have played in those far-off days. We simply cannot resist the magic of the sacrifice, because enthusiasm for sacrifice lies in the nature of man.

The habit of valuing a game of chess according to the amount of material sacrificed is currently disparaged in expert circles. In a measure this is justified, but yet is to be regretted.

The expert has dipped so deep into the technique of the game that he cannot share in the simple-hearted joys of the people. He watches the play, not from the audience, but from the stage itself. He is also, possibly, a little case-hardened. But the ordinary chess players have preserved fresh and natural feelings, and enthuse now as ever for the combinative style.

Although he was always looking for brilliancies and sacrifices on the chessboard, in real life he was the meekest and most retiring of men. When I knew him in the 1930s his only pleasure in life apart from chess was beer. In 1935, when the Soviets invited the masters who had participated in the international tournament at Moscow to stay on, Spielmann refused because he could not stand the beer!

Over the chessboard Spielmann was frequently brilliant indeed. "I can see combinations as well as Alekhine," he used to say, "but I cannot get to the same positions." Here he put his finger on his strength and weakness.

In his book Spielmann attempted to classify the various types of sacrifices. The one in the following game he dubbed a "King hunt."

RUBINSTEIN SPIELMANN
San Sebastian, 1912
Dutch Defense

1 P–Q4 P–K3
2 P–QB4 P–KB4
3 N–QB3 B–N5
4 B–Q2 N–KB3
5 P–KN3 O–O
6 B–N2 P–Q3
7 P–QR3

Loss of time.

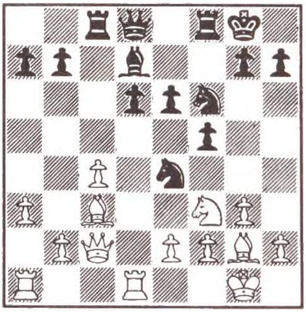
7 . . . BxN
8 BxB QN–Q2
9 Q–B2 P–B4
10 PxP?

Spielmann shows mastery of hypermodern ideas which Rubinstein does not. Almost anything was better than the text.

10 . . . NxP
11 N–B3 N(B4)–K5
12 O–O B–Q2
13 KR–Q1?

Better was *13* QR–Q1.

13 . . . R–B1



14 BxN

This unpleasant move is forced. Spielmann points out that the alternative *14* N–Q2? is refuted by . . . NxBP! *15* KxN N–N5ch *16* K–B3 B–B3ch winning. If the White Rook were still at KB1, that is, if White had played *13* QR–Q1 before, this sacrifice would not be feasible.

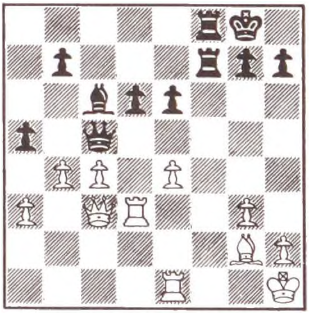
14 . . . QxB
15 Q–N3 R–QB2
16 N–K1 N–B4
17 Q–N4 P–B5
18 N–Q3 PxP
19 BPxP NxN
20 RxN Q–B7ch
21 K–R1 B–B3!
22 P–K4

This unpleasant rejoinder is again forced. For if instead *22* BxB QxKP is decisive. Now Black has time to build up his attack.

22 . . . R(B2)–B2
23 R–K1

If *23* QxQP QxQNP.

23 . . . P–QR4!
24 Q–B3 Q–QB4
25 P–QN4



25 . . . BxP!!

Spielmann says: "The hostile King is forced into the open. It is therefore a King-Hunt sacrifice. I could not calculate the combination more exactly, and I had to rely entirely on my conviction that favorable variations would occur as a matter of course. And events proved me to be right."

26 RxB

If 26 BxB R–B8ch 27 RxR RxRch 28 K–N2 R–N8ch 29 K–B3 Q–R4ch 30 K–K3 QxP, and, writes Spielmann, "He who would not boldly undertake to win such a position with Black will never go far in the domain of the sacrifice."

Of course the Queen could not be captured because of mate at KB8.

26	. . .	R–B8ch!
27	BxR	RxBch
28	K–N2	Q–B7ch
29	K–R3	R–KR8

"The combination had been calculated up to this point. Black is a Rook down, but drives the King to the fourth rank. Such an attack must get home!" (Spielmann)

30	R–B3	QxRPch
31	K–N4	Q–R4ch
32	K–B4	Q–R3ch
33	K–N4	P–KN4!

Threatening . . . Q–R4 mate.

34 RxP

A last hope.

34	. . .	QxRch
35	R–B5	

KxP loses also.

35	. . .	P–R3!
36	Q–Q3	K–N2
37	K–B3	

The threat was . . . K–N3.

37	. . .	R–B8ch
38	QxR	QxRch
39	K–N2	QxQch
40	KxQ	PxP
41	PxP	K–B3
42	K–B2	P–R4
	Resigns	

Spielmann refers to the following game as an example of the mating sacrifice. It is chock full of surprises!

SPIELMANN HÖNLINGER

Match: Vienna, 1929

Caro-Kann Defense

1	P–K4	P–QB3
2	P–Q4	P–Q4
3	N–QB3	PxP
4	NxP	N–B3
5	N–N3	P–K3
6	N–B3	P–B4
7	B–Q3	N–B3
8	PxP	BxP
9	P–QR3	O–O
10	O–O	P–QN3
11	P–N4	B–K2
12	B–N2	

The White pieces are superbly poised for an attack against the enemy King; Black must defend precisely from here on in.

12 . . . Q–B2?

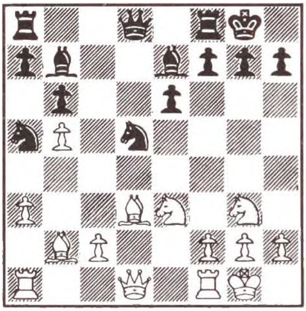
A loss of time.

13 P–N5! N–QR4
14 N–K5 B–N2
15 N–N4 Q–Q1

Spielmann later suggested Q–KB5.

16 N–K3 N–Q4?

But now . . . R–B1 was essential. "There follow sacrificial revels," says Spielmann.



17 Q–R5 P–N3

On the alternative 17 . . . P–KR3 18 BxP!! wins; e.g., 18 . . . KxB 19 N(K3)–B5ch and mates soon. And if 17 . . . P–B4, again a sacrifice: 18 N(K3)xP PxN 19 NxP is decisive.

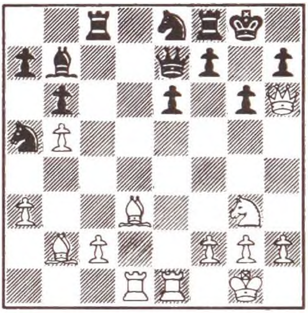
18 N–N4!

Threatening N–R6 mate.

18 . . . B–KB3
19 NxBch NxN

Or 19 . . . QxN 20 BxQ PxQ 21 NxP.

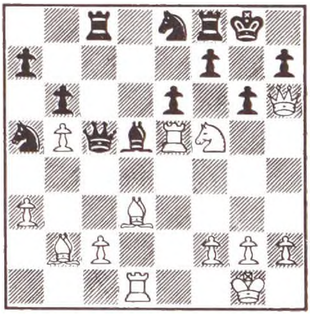
20 Q–R6 R–B1
21 QR–Q1 Q–K2
22 KR–K1 N–K1



23 N–B5!! Q–B4

The sacrifice cannot be accepted: if 23 . . . NPxN 24 BxP P–B3 25 BxKPch.

24 R–K5! B–Q4

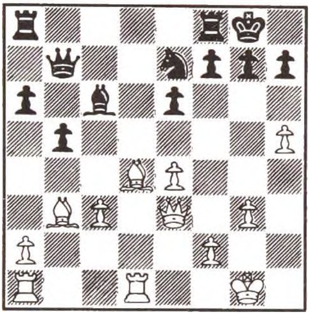


25 N–K7ch!! Resigns

Too bad he avoids the pretty finish 25 . . . QxN 26 QxRPch! KxQ 27 R–R5ch and mate next move.

Here are two more of Spielmann's brilliancies.

Gruenfeld

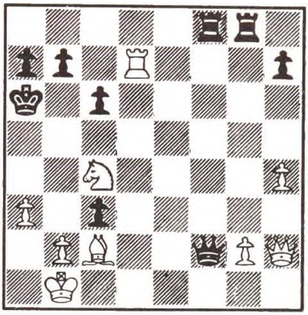


Spielmann—TO PLAY

Carlsbad, 1929

1	BxNP!	KxB
2	Q–N5ch	N–N3
3	P–R6ch	Resigns

Mieses



Spielmann—TO PLAY

Match, 1910

1	Q–B7!!	Q–B8ch
2	K–R2	QxNch
3	P–N3	Q–N4
4	P–R4!	Q–N3
5	B–Q3ch	K–R4
6	Q–K5ch!	P–B4
7	RxNP!!	RxPch
8	K–R3	R–N5
9	RxQ	PxR
10	Q–B7	Resigns

Savielly Tartakower

Tartakower liked to describe himself as an "old routinier." For many years he was part of the line-up of most big international tournaments. Although his heyday came in the 1920s, he remained an opponent to be feared until he died in 1956.

Born in Russia in 1888, Tartakower was a student of law and literature before the First World War. He was a man of broad cultural attainments, a master linguist, a poet, a wit, a philosopher, and a most delightful conversationalist.

It was not until after the war that Tartakower became a professional chess master. It is said that he was inspired by a brother who was killed in action. At any rate, he soon became a familiar figure in international tournaments. His most notable victory was first prize at London in 1927.

Tartakower was an inexhaustible journalist and writer. Books and articles in countless number flowed from his prolific pen. His most lasting contribution to chess literature is the little-known *Die Hypermoderne Schachpartie*.

After the war Tartakower settled in France and became a French citizen. Were it not for his love of gambling (in which respect he was similar to another Pole who had settled in France, David Janowsky) and a dislike for the quiet life, he might well have reached the world championship class. An article in *Chess Review* said of him: "Since his health becomes more delicate with age, he toys with the idea of giving up practical chess and retiring to his villa in the Cote d'Azur. This plan is excellent—only for sundry reasons he has not yet acquired said villa."

Tartakower had an eclectic style and a great fondness for unusual variations, which he often regarded as a challenge to his opponents. When he succeeded the results could be magnificent. Here is a case in point.

MAROCZY TARTAKOWER

Teplitz-Schönau, 1922

Dutch Defense

1 **P–Q4** **P–K3**
2 **P–QB4** **P–KB4**
3 **N–QB3** **N–KB3**
4 **P–QR3**

Meaningless and not to be recommended. Better is simply P–KN3.

4 . . . **B–K2**
5 **P–K3?**

This line was abandoned a long time ago.

5 . . . **O–O**
6 **B–Q3** **P–Q4**
7 **N–B3**

Having made so many errors, he might at least have tried 7 KN–K2 to follow with P–B3 and P–K4.

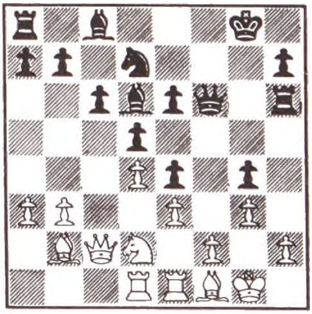
7 . . . **P–B3**
8 **O–O** **N–K5**
9 **Q–B2** **B–Q3**
10 **P–QN3** **N–Q2**
11 **B–N2** **R–B3!**

The attack commences.

12 **KR–K1** **R–R3**
13 **P–N3** **Q–B3**
14 **B–KB1** **P–KN4!**
15 **QR–Q1** **P–N5**
16 **NxN**

Inviting the combination. But if *16* N–Q2 NxBP! is decisive.

16 . . . **BPxN**
17 **N–Q2**



17 . . . **RxP!!**

According to Tartakower, this game was not awarded the brilliancy prize because the judges did not believe that he completely foresaw it to the end!

18 **KxR** **QxPch**
19 **K–R1** **N–B3**
20 **R–K2** **QxP**

Black certainly has a strong attack, but that it is worth a full Rook has yet to be demonstrated.

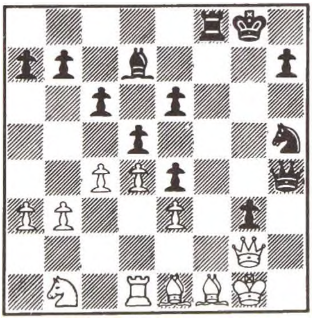
21 **N–N1** **N–R4**
22 **Q–Q2** **B–Q2**
23 **R–B2**

To prevent . . . R–B1.

23 . . . **Q–R5ch**
24 **K–N1** **B–N6!**
25 **B–B3**

Compulsory, for if 25 R–K2 R–KB1 is conclusive.

25 . . . **BxRch**
26 **QxB** **P–N6**
27 **Q–KN2** **R–KB1**
28 **B–K1**



28 . . . **RxBch!!**

This second Rook sacrifice clinches matters.

29 **KxR** **P–K4**
30 **K–N1** **B–N5!**

And there is no defense against . . . B–B6. A magnificent conception.

31 **BxP** **NxB**
32 **R–K1** **N–B4**

Not . . . B–B6 33 Q–R2.

33 **Q–KB2** **Q–N4**
34 **QPxP**

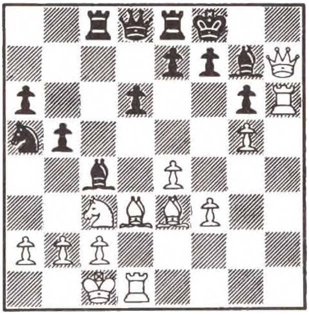
Despair.

34 . . . **B–B6ch**
35 **K–B1** **N–N6ch**
Resigns

For if 36 K–N1 N–R8ch!!.

Tartakower's games abound in tactical surprises. Here is a choice selection of some of them.

Vidmar



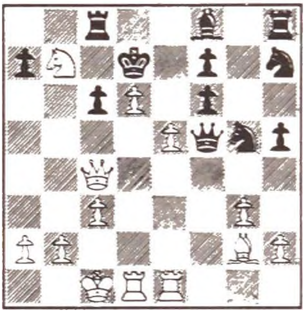
Tartakower—TO PLAY

Vienna, 1906

1 **P–K5!!** **BxB**
2 **P–K6!!** **RxN**

3	PxR	Q–B1
4	B–Q4	P–B3
5	PxP	PxP
6	BxP	Q–N2
7	Q–R8ch!	BxQ
8	RxB mate	

N

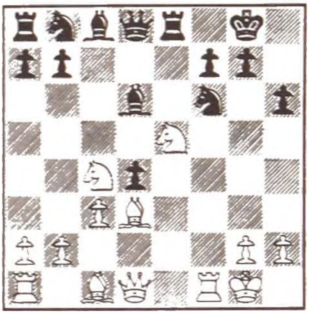


Tartakower—TO PLAY

Blindfold Exhibition, 1921

1	QxKBPch!!	NxQ
2	P–K6ch	QxP
3	N–B5ch	K–Q1
4	NxQch	K–Q2
5	N–B5ch	K–Q1
6	N–N7ch	K–Q2
7	B–R3ch	P–B4
8	BxP mate	

Schlechter



Tartakower—TO PLAY

St. Petersburg, 1909

1	NxP!	KxN
2	Q–R5ch	K–N1
3	RxN!	R–K8ch
4	R–B1	RxRch
5	BxR	B–B1
6	BxP	Q–B3
7	B–N5	Q–B4
8	N–Q6	BxN
9	B–B4ch	B–K3
10	R–KB1	QxRch
11	BxQ and wins.	

Frederick Dewhurst Yates

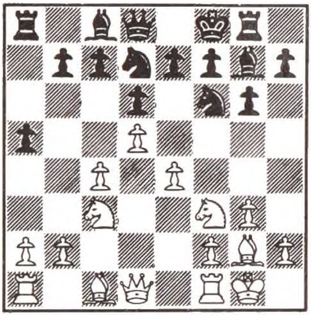
After the disappearance of Blackburne and Burn from the international scene, England's outstanding representative was F. D. Yates. His first entry into international competition had a rather amusing twist to it. It took place at Hamburg in 1910. Tarrasch protested against his participation because he was too inexperienced. Yates won only one game in the tournament—against Tarrasch! In the 1920s Yates generally did reasonably well, though he was never among the top stars. His style was vigorous and forceful, and he produced many a pretty game. His most celebrated victory, against Alekhine, won him a well-deserved brilliancy prize.

ALEKHINE **YATES**

Carlsbad 1923

King's Indian Defense

1 P–Q4	N–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–KN3
3 P–KN3	B–N2
4 B–N2	O–O
5 N–QB3	P–Q3
6 N–B3	N–B3
7 P–Q5	N–N1
8 P–K4	QN–Q2
9 O–O	P–QR4



One of the standard positions of the King's Indian. White's objective is the Q-side, Black's the K-side.

10 B–K3

Loss of time. Better was P–KR3.

10 . . .	N–N5
11 B–Q4	N(N5)–K4
12 NxN	

Every exchange frees Black's game.

12 . . .	NxN
13 P–B5	

If *13* P–B4 B–N5! *14* Q–Q2 NxP and Black wins.

13 . . .	PxP!
14 BxP	P–N3
15 B–Q4	B–QR3!
16 R–K1	

Yates now has a strong initiative which he does not relinquish.

16 . . .	Q–Q3!

Preventing *17* P–B4, which would now be refuted by *17* . . . N–Q6! *18* BxB Q–B4ch winning.

17 B–B1	BxB
18 RxB	P–QB4!

Seizing the proper moment to rid himself of the backward pawn. If in reply *19* PxP e.p.? QxB! *20* QxQ N–B6ch wins a piece.

19 BxN	QxB
20 Q–N3	QR–N1
21 Q–N5?	

A strategical error. He should have played *21* QR–Q1 to threaten P–B4 and P–K5.

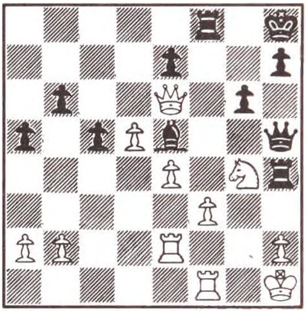
21 . . .	P–B4!

With secure control of the center Black begins a counterattack.

22 QR–K1	P–KB5!
23 Q–Q7	QR–Q1
24 PxP	QxBP
25 Q–K6ch	

He cannot take the pawn, for after *25* QxP Q–N5ch *26* K–R1 Q–B6ch *27* K–N1 R(Q1)–K1 *28* Q–Q7 R–K4 wins.

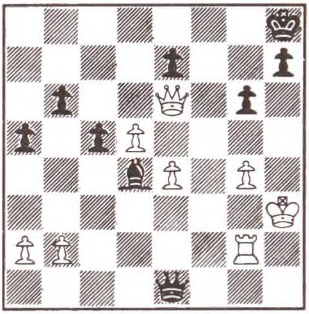
25	. . .	K–R1
26	P–B3	Q–N4ch
27	K–R1	R–Q3
28	Q–R3	B–K4
29	R–K2	R(Q3)–KB3
30	N–Q1	R–B5
31	N–K3	R–R5
32	Q–K6	Q–R4
33	N–N4	



Alekhine's position now appears to be secure, at least temporarily, but Yates produces one of the longest and most brilliant combinations on record.

33	. . .	RxN!!
34	PxR	RxRch
35	K–N2	QxRPch
36	KxR	Q–R8ch
37	K–B2	B–Q5ch
38	K–N3	Q–N8ch
39	K–R3	Q–B8ch
40	R–N2	Q–R8ch
41	K–N3	Q–K8ch
42	K–R3	

All White's moves have been forced.



42	. . .	P–KN4!!!

A magnificent interpolation. The threat of . . . Q–R5 mate cannot be met without material loss.

43	R–QB2	Q–B8ch
44	K–R2	Q–N8ch
45	K–R3	Q–R8ch
46	K–N3	Q–Q8!!!
47	R–B3	

Desperation. If instead 47 R–N2 Q–K8ch 48 any, Q–K6 or Q–R5 mate, while if 47 R–R2 Q–N8ch 48 K–R3 Q–K6ch 49 K–N2 Q–B7ch and mate next.

47	. . .	Q–N8ch
48	K–R3	Q–B8ch
49	K–N3	B–B7ch
50	K–B3	B–N8 dis ch

Resigns—it is mate in two.

Edward Lasker

German-born Edward Lasker came to the U.S. shortly after the First World War and quickly became one of the leading American masters. In 1923 he surprised everybody by almost beating Marshall in a match for the American championship. Lasker might have gone much further in chess, but his energies were taken up by other interests; he is an engineer by profession, and a most ingenious one. In recent years Lasker has enriched chess literature considerably with a number of entertaining books.

Here is a snappy Lasker victory from his early days.

EDWARD LASKER
SIR GEORGE THOMAS
London, 1912
Dutch Defense

1 P–Q4 P–KB4
2 N–QB3

This was a skittles game and the opening was played in skittles style. 2 P–K4 is a good gambit; the positionally correct move, however, is 2 N–KB3.

2 . . . N–KB3
3 N–B3 P–K3
4 B–N5 B–K2
5 BxN BxB
6 P–K4 PxP?

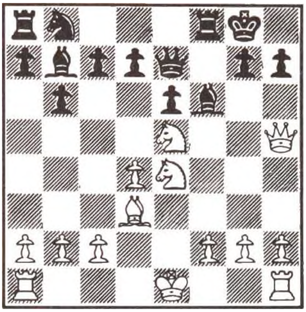
Better 6 . . . P–Q3.

7 NxP P–QN3
8 N–K5 O–O
9 B–Q3 B–N2?

Essential was 9 . . . Q–K1.

10 Q–R5! Q–K2

There is no real defense: if *10* . . . QBxN *11* BxB P–R3 *12* BxR.

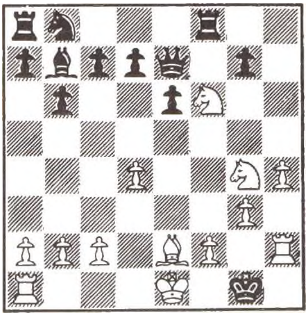


Here White announced mate in eight moves:

11 QxPch!! KxQ
12 NxB dbl ch K–R3

Or *12* . . . K–R1 *13* N–N6 mate.

13 N(K5)–N4ch K–N4
14 P–R4ch K–B5
15 P–N3ch K–B6
16 B–K2ch K–N7
17 R–R2ch K–N8



18 K–Q2 mate!

7.

The Age of Alekhine

The years from 1927, when Alekhine won from Capablanca, to 1935, when he lost to Euwe, were a rich period in the history of the game. It was then that chess supremacy first began to leave the Old World. By 1931 the U.S. chess team had won first prize in the International Team Tournament at Prague and continued to be an easy winner in the three succeeding tournaments. In the wake of the world-wide depression from 1929 on, a whole crop of new masters sprang up, many of them Americans. The Russians also began to develop at this time. In 1935, the year Alekhine lost his title, Botvinnik tied for first prize in the great international tournament at Moscow. Other Soviet masters were not yet up to his strength, but they were already on a par with masters like Stahlberg and Pirc. Above all, the development of chess outside Europe, as seen in the growth of new clubs, magazines, books, tournaments, reached a height never before seen. No doubt Alekhine's travels around the world helped to inspire much activity. It was in this period that chess became the really universal game.

Alexander Alexandrovich Alekhine

In 1925 Tartakower wrote: "Capablanca is world champion, Lasker was world champion, Alekhine plays the way a world champion ought to play." To the keen critic Alekhine's incredible talents were always evident, but the general public remained unconvinced until he won the title in spectacular style.

Alekhine was born in Moscow in 1892, scion of a wealthy Russian family. We are told that his mother taught him the game at an early age, and he soon became a rabid enthusiast. At school he would spend his time playing blindfold chess. His progress was so rapid that by sixteen he was already a master. At Hamburg in 1910, he played in his first masters' tournament, with fair success. Chess was by now his consuming passion, and his family's fortune gave him the means to pursue it to his heart's content. (His father is reported to have lost two million rubles at Monte Carlo.)

Some successes and failures followed. His first real chance came at St. Petersburg in 1914, where the leading masters of the world were arraved. Alekhine and Nimzovich tied for first prize in an elimination tournament for Russian masters and were both admitted to the finals. Much to the surprise of the chess world, Alekhine finished third, outdistanced only by Lasker and Capablanca. A warm friendship grew up between Alekhine and Capablanca, which was in sharp contrast to the bitterness of the later years.

During the war and the revolution, there was no opportunity for chess activity. Many rumors about him went the rounds. One story had it that he was sentenced to be shot but was saved at the last minute because Trotsky visited his cell to play chess with him and spared him because of his fame. Alekhine himself once told me that he spent some time in a Cheka prison under suspicion of passing on secret information. His knowledge of languages gained him a post in the Foreign Ministry. He used this position to attach himself to a delegation sent abroad, and when he reached Germany, broke away. By 1921 he was out of the U.S.S.R. and on his own.

At this time, the only two masters who were his superiors were Capablanca and Lasker. Lasker was too old to be considered a serious rival; so he concentrated on Capablanca. Day and night he studied Capa's games. There was only one thought in his mind: to win the title.

In the period from 1921 to 1927 he played remarkable chess, technically superior for the most part to that of any of his colleagues, including Capa. One first prize after another came his way. But on the few occasions when he faced his major rivals, he faltered. Some psychological block still stood in his path.

In 1927 the Argentine financed a match between him and Capablanca. It was Alekhine's great chance, and he made the most of it. For months in advance he was in training. He did not drink or smoke; he lived the kind of ascetic existence which boxers go in for before a big event.

The chess world, impressed by the New York 1927 tournament where Capa finished ahead of Alekhine by a wide margin, expected an easy victory for the cool and confident Cuban. Much to everybody's surprise Alekhine won a grueling contest.

For several years Alekhine was inactive in chess. He took a degree in law at the Sorbonne, which by the French rules gave him the title of doctor, and he was henceforth known as Dr. Alekhine.

In the meantime Capablanca was trying to arrange a return match. Time and again the negotiations seemed to be on the point of succeeding, when something went wrong. It soon became clear that Alekhine did not really want to play Capa again. He even went to the length of increasing his retainer demands out of all proportion if Capa were to be included in the same tournament.

But even though he did not want to play Capa, Alekhine was only too eager to play everybody else. In the years from 1929 on, he was extremely active. And apparently invincible. One first prize followed another. It was not merely that he won—but how he won that staggered the chess world! At San Remo in 1930 he allowed two draws and won every other game in grand style. At Bled in 1931, he clinched first prize almost ten rounds before the end. After Capa's dictum that chess was played out and ought to be reformed, Alekhine's victories came like a whirlwind of rejuvenation. The young masters who were developing in the early thirties saw in him an inspiration which they had not found in his predecessor.

Then, along about 1933, something happened. He began to drink more and more. In women he had long since lost interest, prematurely of course, and he became increasingly egocentric. Stories of his drinking were freely circulated; in one simultaneous exhibition he began to urinate on the floor, and the exhibition was canceled. (For a while he worked on a theory of winning by hypnotism.)

By 1935 he was faced by a whole army of young aspirants. Euwe was the first to arrange the necessary backing and defeated him by the odd point. Different From Hero worship in Fischer Bobby

Alekhine now had a goal, to regain the title. But it was no longer the old Alekhine who strode and conquered. After 1934 he never again won first prize in a big international tournament, and even in the smaller ones he did none too well. Although he regained the title from Euwe in 1937, his victory was anticlimactic. There were by now many other challengers, any one of whom might have beaten him.

The war years are not easy to record. Alekhine remained in Nazi-occupied Europe although he had no personal ties to hold him there and became a collaborationist. He wrote a series of ridiculous articles "proving" that only Aryans can play chess well.

The upshot of his wartime activities was that in the first postwar tournament the other masters unanimously refused to play with him. He was rescued from isolation by Botvinnik's challenge to a match in the summer of 1946. A few months later he died suddenly in Portugal.

At his best Alekhine had equals, but he did not have any superiors. For sheer originality, profundity, and technical perfection he was never surpassed. He ranks among the really great artists of the chessboard.

Besides his over-the-board activities, Alekhine was also pre-eminent as an author. His notes appeal more to the expert than to the layman; they are so profound and full of so many insights that generations of aspiring masters will continue to profit from them.

In style Alekhine was the great exponent of the attack. He would almost literally shake combinations out of his sleeve. But it was not merely the combinations; others made combinations too. It was the painstaking preparation, the build-up that characterized him. His feel for positions was uncanny; he could sense an attack where others never dreamed that anything was brewing. Reti has pointed out that the surprise move in an Alekhine attack comes at the end rather than at the beginning.

Alekhine was a man who loved chess and loved to win. When he reached a winning position he never relaxed his grip; his sheer joy in beating his opponent was too great. It was for this reason that he could devote his entire life to chess and derive so much enjoyment from it; being world champion was a boost to his ego which none of his predecessors had felt, with the possible exception of Steinitz. Alekhine lived only to prove that he could beat anyone; and when he lost his only thought was to continue until he won. I recall when he visited New York in the early part of 1933, he came to the Marshall Chess Club, where I was then champion, and played a number of offhand games with me. This was in itself most unusual, as I was impressed by the throng of famous masters who kept themselves aloof from chess outside of tournament play. But not Alekhine. In these games I just about held my own with him, and at this he became so furious that he demanded that a skittles match be arranged for a small stake; he could not bear the thought that anyone might beat him, even in offhand games. In other games his need to win was just as great and soul-consuming. When he lost at ping-pong he would crush the ball in anger!

Out of this need to win came the peculiar characteristic of his style: in a won position he played to perfection. Other masters win games, but not in the way that Alekhine did. He literally reveled in every move as the end approached. There were no mistakes, no slips; once the game was won he was in his element. He simply enjoyed it too much to falter. For this reason so many of his games are models of technical precision, and the collection of his best games is among the three most beautiful that we have (I would rank Lasker and Fischer as the other two).

Alekhine was also a superb blindfold player, and his record was 32 games at the Chicago World's Fair in 1933, a feat surpassed quantitatively only by Koltanowski and Najdorf.

Alekhine considered the following two games his most brilliant tournament victories.

BOGOLYUBOV ALEKHINE

Hastings, 1922

Dutch Defense

1 P–Q4 P–KB4

A defense which Alekhine rarely adopted in those days. But he was a half a point behind Rubinstein and had to play for a win at all costs.

2 P–QB4 N–KB3
3 P–KN3 P–K3
4 B–N2 B–N5ch

Nowadays . . . B–K2 is preferred.

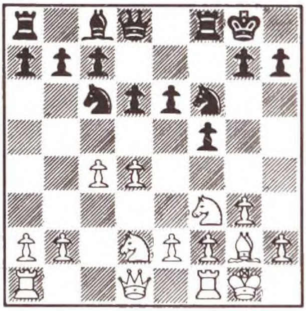
5 B–Q2 BxBch

Many years later Alekhine experimented with the dubious . . . B–K2.

6 NxB

Stronger is QxB.

6 . . . N–B3
7 KN–B3 O–O
8 O–O P–Q3



White has mishandled the opening, and Black has a comfortable position. The immediate intention is . . . P–K4.

9 Q–N3

A useless misconception. He hopes for 9 . . . P–K4? 10 P–B5 dis ch, with attacking chances.

9 . . . K–R1
10 Q–B3 P–K4!

Now Bogolyubov realizes that his play was completely at fault. Naturally the pawn cannot be taken because the QN is loose at the end: 11 PxP? PxP 12 NxP? NxN 13 QxN QxN.

11 P–K3 P–QR4
12 P–N3

To hold Black's N out. If 12 P–QR3? immediately, then 12 . . . P–R5! is too strong.

12 . . . Q–K1
13 P–QR3 Q–R4!

To build up threats on the other wing. Again the pawn is taboo: after 14 PxP PxP 15 NxP? NxN 16 QxN N–N5! wins the Queen.

14 P–KR4

Threatening PxP.

14 . . . N–KN5!
15 N–N5

This is a game where it is all too easy to criticize White's play but difficult to suggest satisfactory alternatives.

15 . . . B–Q2

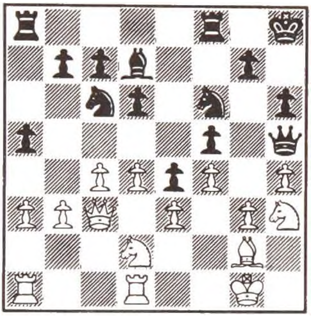
15 . . . P–B5 was also to be considered.

16 P–B3 N–B3
17 P–B4

To prevent . . . P–B5.

17 . . . P–K5
18 KR–Q1 P–R3
19 N–R3

Alekhine recommended 19 P–Q5! instead. After the text Black ingeniously demolishes the opponent's center and shifts his initiative to the Q's wing.



19 . . . P–Q4!
20 N–B1 N–K2

Threatening . . . P–R5.

21 P–R4 N–B3!
22 R–Q2 N–QN5
23 B–R1

Bogolyubov is going through the exertions of a contortionist to get some counterplay; but it is in vain.

23 . . . Q–K1!
24 R–K2

He decides to give up a pawn. On the alternative 24 P–B5 P–QN4! 25 PxP e.p. PxP Black soon penetrates on the QB-file.

24 . . . PxP
25 PxP BxP
26 N–B2 B–Q2

Alekhine is a pawn ahead. For other masters there would still be a note on "technical difficulties," but he is in his element.

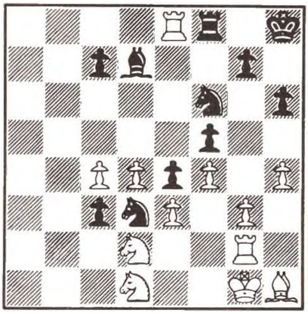
27 N–Q2 P–QN4!
28 N–Q1 N–Q6!

Flexing for an explosive finish.

29 RxP P–N5!
30 RxR PxQ!!

The Alekhine touch. This and the following he of course foresaw some moves back.

31 RxQ



31 . . . P–B7!!!

The point. Black must queen.

32 RxRch K–R2
33 N–B2 P–B8=Qch
34 N–B1

Theoretically the material is still even: White has two Rooks and a pawn for the Queen, but Black's attack is decisive.

34 . . . N–K8!
35 R–R2 QxBP
36 R–QN8 B–N4
37 RxB

Alekhine has played with foresight. If instead 37 N–Q2 Q–B8 is murderous; e.g., 38 RxB N–B6 dbl ch and mate in two.

37 . . . QxR
38 P–N4

Desperation.

38 . . . N–B6ch
39 BxN PxB
40 PxP Q–K7!

Another beautiful point: White is in zugzwang. If *41* N–N4 NxN!, and if *41* R–R3 N–N5!.

41 P–Q5 K–N1
42 P–R5 K–R2

Now White's pawn moves are almost exhausted and he must lose material.

43 P–K4

Now all the pawns go.

43 . . . NxP
44 NxN QxN
45 P–Q6 PxP
46 P–B6 PxP
47 R–Q2 Q–K7!

Exact to the end!

48 RxQ PxR
49 K–B2 PxN=Qch
50 KxQ K–N2
51 K–B2 K–B2
52 K–K3 K–K3
53 K–K4 P–Q4ch
Resigns

RETI ALEKHINE

Baden-Baden, 1925

King's Fianchetto Opening

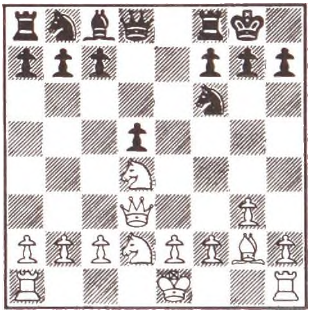
1 P–KN3 P–K4
2 N–KB3

Now we have an Alekhine's opening in reverse! (*1* P–K4 N–KB3).

2 . . . P–K5
3 N–Q4 P–Q4
4 P–Q3 PxP

In Alekhine's defense proper *4* . . . P–QB4 is good; here it was also a strong alternative.

5 QxP N–KB3
6 B–N2 B–N5ch
7 B–Q2 BxBch
8 NxB O–O



The opening has resulted in an even game, but both sides thirst for complications.

9 P–QB4! N–R3
10 PxP N–QN5
11 Q–B4 QNxQP
12 N(Q2)–N3 P–B3
13 O–O R–K1
14 KR–Q1 B–N5!

To prevent P–K4.

15 R–Q2 Q–B1!
16 N–QB5 B–R6!

The fun begins. Reti must have thought that he had prevented this move.

17 B–B3

There is a subtle combination involved: *17* BxB? QxB *18* NxNP N–KN5 *19* N–B3 N(Q4)–K6 *20* PxN NxKP *21* QxPch! K–R1 *22* N–R4 R–KB1 and wins.

17 . . . B–N5
18 B–N2 B–R6
19 B–B3 B–N5

Alekhine is content with a draw.

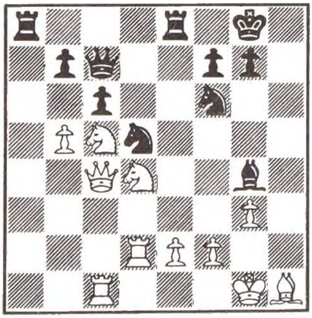
20 B–R1

Reti decides to play for a win.

20 . . . P–KR4!
21 P–N4 P–QR3
22 R–QB1 P–R5
23 P–R4 PxP
24 RPxP Q–B2
25 P–N5!?

Alekhine recommends instead *25* P–K4 N–N3 *26* Q–N3.

25 . . . RPxP
26 PxP



26 . . . R–K6!!

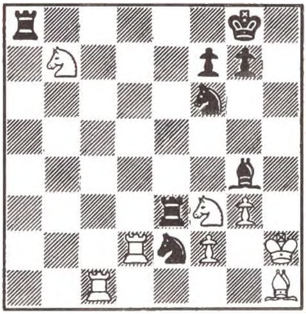
Now we are in for Alekhine's most celebrated combination.

27 N–B3

Alekhine suggests *27* B–B3 as the only chance, but Black still retains an advantage after *27* . . . BxB *28* PxB PxP *29* NxP(N5) Q–R4!. Of course, if *27* PxR QxPch is devastating.

27 . . . PxP
28 QxP N–B6!
29 QxP QxQ
30 NxQ NxPch
31 K–R2

If *31* K–B1 NxPch wins.



A fantastic position; so much is *en prise*. Yet the material is even, and one would ordinarily expect a quick draw. But Alekhine has a trick up his sleeve: he will win White's QN at N7 after twelve forced moves!

31 . . . N–K5
32 R–B4

Relatively best. If *32* PxR Nx R(Q7) *33* NxN NxR.

32	. . .	NxBP
33	B–N2	B–K3!
34	R(B4)–B2	N–N5ch
35	K–R3	

Forced, for if 35 K–R1 R–R8ch.

35	. . .	N–K4 dis ch
36	K–R2	RxN!
37	RxN	

On 37 BxR NxBch Black comes out a piece ahead.

37	. . .	N–N5ch
38	K–R3	N–K6 dis ch
39	K–R2	NxR
40	BxR	N–Q5!

The final point. If now *41* R–KB2 NxBch *42* RxN B–Q4 and White's N is lost!.

Resigns

17 From a technical point of view the game which won Alekhine the title from Capablanca is unquestionably the finest of his career.

ALEKHINE CAPABLANCA

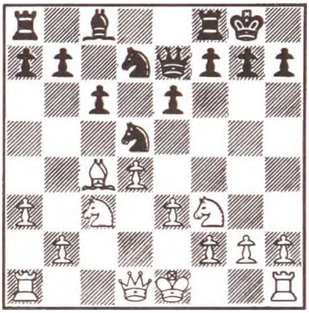
34th Match Game, 1927

Queen's Gambit Declined

1	P–Q4	P–Q4
2	P–QB4	P–K3
3	N–QB3	N–KB3
4	B–N5	QN–Q2
5	P–K3	P–B3

The Queen's Gambit Declined was almost played to death in this match. Alekhine essays an unusual wrinkle to avoid the Cambridge Springs Defense.

6	P–QR3	B–K2
7	N–B3	O–O
8	B–Q3	PxP
9	BxBP	N–Q4
10	BxB	QxB



11 N–K4!

A new idea at the time. The fifth game, with Capablanca as White, had continued *11* R–QB1 NxN *12* RxN P–K4, and although White kept the initiative he could do little with it.

11	. . .	N(Q4)–B3
12	N–N3	P–B4
13	O–O	N–N3

Not too bad, but *13* . . . PxP first was better; for if then *14* NxP N–K4.

14	B–R2	PxP
15	NxP	P–N3

Preparing . . . P–K4.

16	R–B1	B–Q2

If at once *16* . . . P–K4 *17* N–N5 is strong.

17 Q–K2 QR–B1
18 P–K4 P–K4
19 N–B3 K–N2
20 P–R3 P–KR3?

Needless loss of time. 20 . . . RxR followed by R–QB1 was preferable.

21 Q–Q2!

Threatening Q–R5, and posing many problems for Capa.

The counterthreat 21 . . . B–B3 is refuted by 22 N–R4!, for if then 22 . . . NxP 23 N(R4)–B5ch PxN 24 NxPch K–N3 25 QxPch KxN 26 P–N4 mate.

21 . . . B–K3?

A mistake which costs a pawn and the game, match, and title. Emanuel Lasker later pointed out that the only saving move is 21 . . . N–R5!, for if then 22 Q–R5 NxNP 23 QxRP R–QR1 with the better game for Black.

In an analogous situation Lasker made a crucial blunder against Capa. It is easy to criticize from the sidelines!

22 BxB QxB
23 Q–R5 N–B5
24 QxRP NxNP

The only chance. If first . . . P–QN4 25 P–N3 is adequate.

25 RxR RxR
26 QxP N–B5

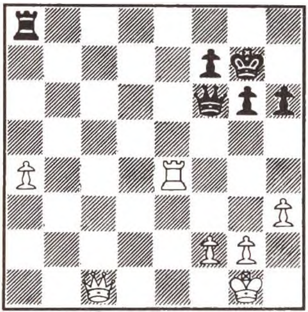
Alekhine has won a pawn, but the technical difficulties are still enormous. A lesser master might well have faltered against Capablanca.

The first step is to consolidate the position.

27 Q–N4 R–QR1
28 R–R1 Q–B3
29 P–QR4! NxP!
30 NxP!

. . . Black's move had been foreseen.

30 . . . Q–Q3
31 QxN QxN
32 R–K1 N–Q3!
33 Q–B1! Q–B3
34 N–K4! NxN
35 RxN



First & last

Now an endgame is reached which is almost a facsimile of the first and twenty-first match games.

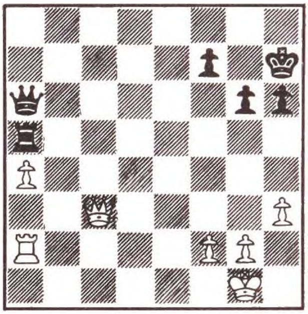
35 . . . R–QN1
36 R–K2 R–QR1
37 R–R2

His immediate objective is to tie up Black's pieces.

37 . . . R–R4
38 Q–B7 Q–R3

It certainly is not easy to see how White can proceed in this position.

39 Q–B3ch K–R2



40 R–Q2!!

Now the point becomes clear: mating threats are developed on the K-side while Black's pieces are tied up on the other wing. Black must then either defend against mate or allow the pawn to advance.

40 . . . Q–N3

After 40 . . . RxP? 41 R–Q8 wins.

41 R–Q7 Q–N8ch
42 K–R2 Q–N1ch
43 P–N3 R–KB4

He prefers an active defense.

44 Q–Q4 Q–K1
45 R–Q5!!

Of course not 45 R–Q8? Rx Pch!.

45 . . . R–B6

After 45 . . . RxR 46 QxR QxP 47 QxPch K–R1 48 QxP, White wins easily.

46 P–R4

An inaccuracy; 46 K–N2 wins more quickly, for if then . . . R–N6 47 R–Q8.

46 . . . Q–KR1
47 Q–N6!

White must be very careful. After 47 QxQch? KxQ 48 P–R5 R–R6 Black draws.

47 . . . Q–B6
48 K–N2 R–B3
49 Q–Q4!

Forcing the exchange of Queens at a favorable moment. As long as Black's Rook cannot get behind the passed pawn the game is won.

49 . . . QxQ
50 RxQ K–N2
51 P–QR5 R–R3
52 R–Q5 R–QB3
53 R–Q4 R–R3
54 R–R4 K–B3
55 K–B3 K–K4
56 K–K3 P–R4

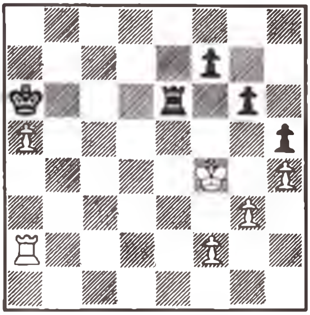
If Black's King goes to the Queenside, then White allows the exchange of Rooks and enters the opposite wing.

57 K–Q3 K–Q4
58 K–B3 K–B4
59 R–R2 K–N4
60 R–N2ch K–B4

61 R–R2 K–N4
62 K–Q4 R–Q3ch

On 62 . . . R–R1 63 P–R6.

63 K–K5 R–K3ch
64 K–B4 K–R3



Black's Rook and King have exchanged positions. The decisive action now takes place on the Kingside.

65 K–N5 R–K4ch
66 K–R6 R–KB4
67 P–B4 R–B4
68 R–R3 R–B2
69 K–N7 R–Q2
70 P–B5!

The most precise.

70 . . . PxP
71 K–R6 P–B5
72 PxP R–Q4
73 K–N7 R–KB4
74 R–R4

Black must weaken himself further.

74 . . . K–N4
75 R–K4! K–R3
76 K–R6!

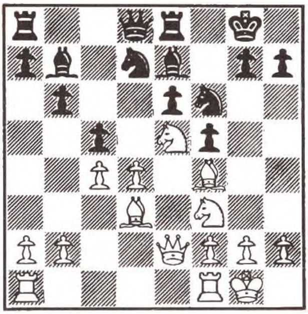
A pretty idea.

76 . . . RxRP
77 R–K5 R–R8
78 KxP R–KN8
79 R–KN5 R–KR8
80 R–KB5 K–N3
81 RxP K–B3
82 R–K7 Resigns

The remainder is "book."

There are so many Alekhine brilliancies to choose from that it is difficult to make a selection. Here are some of my favorites.

Feldt



Alekhine—TO PLAY

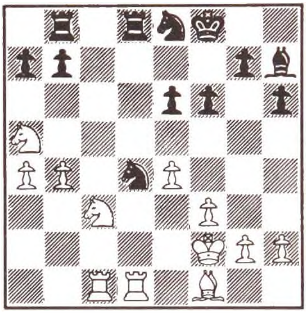
Blindfold Display
Tarnapol, 1916

1 N–B7! KxN
2 QxPch!! K–N3

If 2 . . . KxN 3 N–N5 mate.

3 P–KN4 B–K5
4 N–R4 mate

Bogolyubov



Alekhine—TO PLAY

Match, 1929

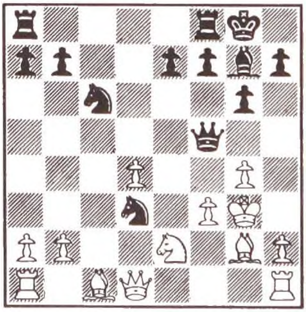
White won a pawn by means of the following tactic:

1	N–N5!	NxN
2	RxR	RxR
3	NxP!!	R–N1

If 3 . . . R–Q7ch 4 K–K3 R–N7 5 BxN RxQNP 6 R–B8 and wins.

4	N–B5!	K–K2
5	PxN and wins.	

Alekhine—TO PLAY

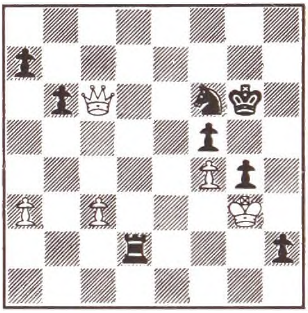


Potemkin

St. Petersburg, 1912

1	. . .	NxQP!!
2	PxQ	NxPch
3	K–R3	N–B7 mate

Alekhine—TO PLAY

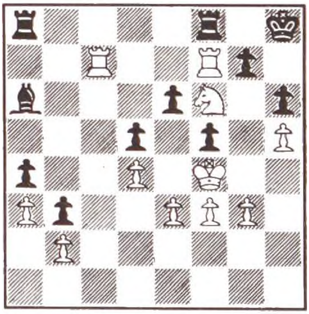


Yates

Kecskemet, 1927

1	. . .	K–R4!!
2	QxN	P–R8=N mate!

Yates



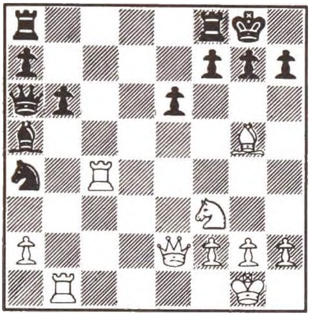
Alekhine—TO PLAY

London, 1922

1	RxP	RxN
2	K–K5!!	Resigns

The Rook is trapped in the middle of the board! If either Rook to KB1, then mate follows in two.

Sterk



Alekhine—TO PLAY

Budapest, 1921

1 **B–B6!!** **KR–B1**

If 1 . . . PxB? 2 R–N4ch wins the Queen.

2 Q–K5 R–B4

If 2 . . . QxR 3 Q–KN5 K–B1 4 QxPch K–K1 5 Q–N8ch K–Q2 6 N–K5ch K–B2 7 QxPch, winning the Queen.

3 Q–N3 P–N3
4 RxN and wins.

Ewfim D. Bogolyubov

Of all the masters who were Alekhine's contemporaries, the only one before Euwe who could obtain backing for a title match was his compatriot, Ewfim Bogolyubov. The results of the matches showed conclusively that the challenger, though a great player in his own right, could not stand up to Alekhine.

Bogolyubov was born in Russia and remained there until 1925, when he scored the biggest success of his life by winning first prize at Moscow ahead of Lasker and Capablanca. Then he emigrated to Germany where he remained and eventually became a naturalized citizen. ~~His~~ greatest victories came during the period 1925–1931 when he was outdistanced only by Alekhine and Capablanca. After that he could not hold his own against the new masters. "The young people have read my book," he would wail in his jovial manner. "Now I have no chance."

In style Bogolyubov was pre-eminently an attacking player; the subtleties of position play held little interest for him. Like other attacking geniuses, such as Marshall and Anderssen, he could produce atrociously poor games as well as sparkling gems; his play was generally uneven. At his best, though, he was a dangerous opponent. We begin with a Bogolyubov classic.

BOGOLYUBOV AMATEUR

Stockholm, 1919

French Defense

1 P–K4 P–K3
2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 N–QB3 N–KB3
4 B–N5 B–K2
5 P–K5 KN–Q2
6 P–KR4

Alekhine's attack, still new then.

6 . . . BxB
7 PxB QxP?

A mistake which meets with a brilliant refutation.

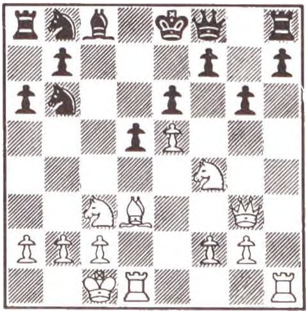
8 N–R3 Q–K2
9 Q–N4 P–KN3

For his pawn, White has a much freer development.

10 N–B4 P–QR3
11 O–O–O P–QB4
12 Q–N3! N–N3?
13 PxP QxP
14 B–Q3

Threatening NxNP and BxPch.

14 . . . Q–B1



15 B–K4!!

An astonishing conception; the White attack now crashes through.

15 . . . PxB

If he declines with 15 . . . N–B3 16 BxP! leads to a quick win.

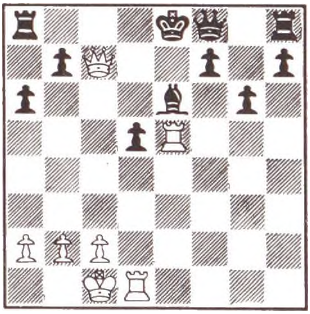
16 NxP(K4) QN–Q2
17 Q–QB3 Q–K2
18 N–B6ch! NxN
19 PxN Q–B1
20 Q–B7 N–Q2

Black is almost stalemated although he is a full piece ahead. The finish is pretty.

21 N–Q5!! PxN

If 21 . . . Q–B4 22 QxQ NxQ 23 N–B7ch.

22 KR–K1ch N–K4
23 RxNch B–K3



24 K–N1!!

A beautiful preparatory move. If 24 R(Q1)xP? immediately, 24 . . . Q–R3ch! gets Black out of his trouble.

24 . . . R–Q1
25 R(Q1)xP!! RxR
26 RxR BxR
27 Q–B8 mate

The following game is the finest positional victory of Bogolyubov's career.

KASHDAN BOGOLYUBOV

Bled, 1931

Gruenfeld Defense

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–KN3
3 N–QB3 B–N2
4 N–B3

Better was P–K4.

4 . . . O–O
5 P–KN3 P–Q4
6 PxP NxP
7 B–N2 NxN

7 . . . P–QB4 was a strong alternative.

8 PxN P–QB4
9 O–O N–B3
10 P–K3

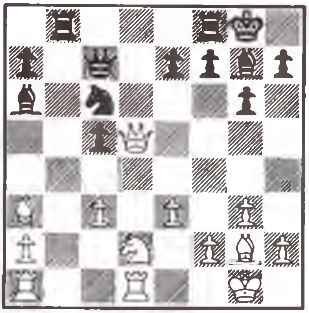
When such a weakening move is necessary, White has definitely been outplayed. Black will now concentrate on the exposed white squares.

10 . . . Q–R4
11 Q–N3 R–N1
12 N–Q2

White is floundering. More aggressive was *12* B–QR3 at once.

12 . . . Q–B2!
13 B–QR3 P–N3!
14 PxP? B–QR3
15 KR–Q1 PxP
16 Q–Q5?

Meets with a brilliant refutation. Q–B2 was essential.



16 . . . N–N5!!
17 Q–N3

The Knight cannot be taken: if *17* PxN BxR *18* RxB KR–Q1 wins.

17 . . . N–Q6
18 Q–B2 Q–R4
19 N–N1 P–B5!

Ingenious. On *20* BxP R–N7! wins White's Queen.

20 B–QB1 R–N3

White is practically stalemated. In desperation he sacrifices a pawn to get some counterplay.

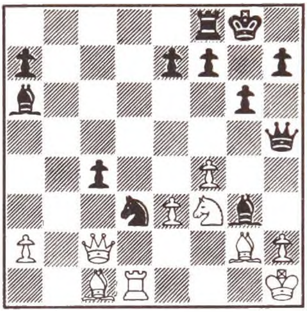
21 N–R3 BxP
22 R–N1 RxR
23 NxR B–K8!

Another pretty idea.

24 P–B4 B–B7ch
25 K–R1 Q–R4!

The attack begins!

26 N–Q2 BxNP
27 N–B3



27 . . . BxRP!

A final elegant coup.

28 NxB QxRch!
29 QxQ N–B7ch
Resigns

Here is an extraordinary game with a tragi-comical endgame position.

BOGOLYUBOV DANIELSSON

Match: Germany-Sweden

1935

French Defense

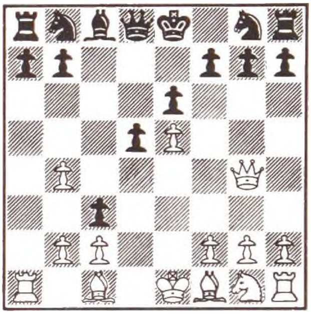
1 P–K4 P–K3
2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 N–QB3 B–N5
4 P–K5 P–QB4

Bogolyubov usually played 5 B–Q2 here, but he plays the modern move.

5 P–QR3 PxP

Better was . . . BxNch followed by . . . N–K2.

6 PxB PxN
7 Q–N4

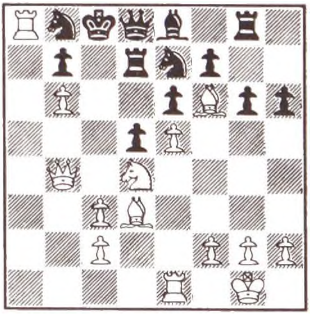


7 . . . P–KN3
8 N–B3 Q–B2
9 B–Q3 N–QB3
10 O–O KN–K2

Black cannot castle after *10* . . . NxKP *11* NxN QxN *12* B–N5ch. Now he concentrates on defense, and the result is amusing.

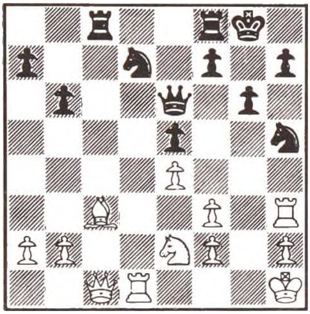
11 R–K1 B–Q2
12 PxP O–O–O
13 P–N5 N–QN1
14 Q–N4 B–K1
15 B–KN5 R–Q2
16 RxRP Q–N3
17 R–R8 Q–Q1
18 N–Q4 P–KR3
19 B–B6 R–N1
20 P–N6 Resigns

FINAL POSITION



Here are a few choice morsels from Bogolyubov's masterpices.

Przepiorka

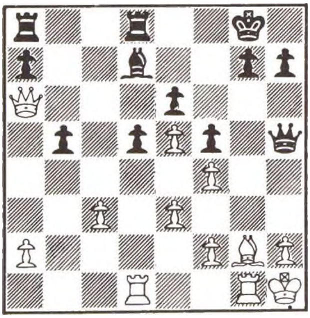


Bogolyubov—TO PLAY

Pistyan, 1922

1	RxN(R5)!	PxR
2	RxN!	RxB!
3	NxR	QxR
4	Q–N5ch	K–R1
5	Q–B6ch	K–N1
6	N–Q5	R–K1
7	Q–N5ch	K–R1
8	N–B6	Q–Q1
9	Q–R6	Q–Q8ch
10	K–N2	R–N1ch
11	NxR	KxN
12	Q–N5ch	K–B1
13	QxKP and wins!	

Mieses



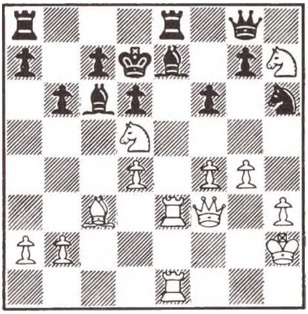
Bogolyubov—TO PLAY

Baden-Baden, 1925

An interesting psychological interplay as Mieses purposely allowed the sacrifice because he did not consider it dangerous.

1	BxP!	PxB
2	RxPch	KxR
3	Q–B6ch	K–N1
4	R–N1ch	Q–N5
5	RxQch	PxR
6	P–B5	KR–QB1
7	P–K6	B–B3
8	Q–B7ch	K–R1
9	P–B6	R–KN1
10	Q–B7	QR–QB1
11	Q–K5	P–Q5ch
12	K–N1	B–Q4
13	P–B7ch	R–N2
14	QxB	Resigns

Rubinstein



Bogolyubov—TO PLAY

1	RxBch	RxR
2	N(R7)xPch	Resigns

Salo Flohr

In the years from 1929 to 1933, when Alekhine was at his peak, Flohr was universally recognized as his most serious challenger. Although he did poorly in individual games with Alekhine, his results were outstanding against the others.

Flohr was born in Horodenka, Russian Poland, in 1908. His parents were killed in a pogrom when he was still young, and during the war he fled to Czechoslovakia where he made his home until the Second World War again uprooted him. He showed an unusual aptitude for chess at an early age and soon discovered that a good living could be made by playing skittles in the cafés. Here he developed his fantastic abilities for quick chess, which later stood him in such good stead in tournaments and simultaneous exhibitions.

In 1929, when he was only 20, he won second prize behind Rubenstein at Rogaska Slatina. Then he began a long string of tournament successes which placed him second only to Alekhine.

This period lasted until about 1935, when his style underwent a considerable change and his play fell off somewhat. He became increasingly cautious, avoiding complications and steering for the endgame as soon as possible. Although he still won some important tournaments, such as the one at Leningrad-Moscow in 1939, he became more and more a drawing master and was content to win a high prize, say fourth or fifth, rather than go after top honors. After the Second World War he settled in the U.S.S.R. and became naturalized there. In recent years he has functioned as a chess journalist, participating little in master tournaments.

What happened to Flohr? We see in him a development similar to that of so many other great masters—a spectacular beginning, loss of the creative urge, tapering off to become a "routine" tournament player who always has a sufficient command of technique to win a high prize, yet no longer capable of the brilliant flights of imagination of his youth. How are we to explain this process? It is not unlike that seen in artists in other fields. Many a writer has written one book—or a few books—and then repeated himself over and over; Sinclair Lewis is an example. Many an artist has done some magnificent painting and then lost his zest for the art; Theodore Dreiser has a splendid description of such a man in his novel *The Genius*.

In Flohr's case the roots of his frantic emphasis on "safety first" are not hard to discover. In 1936, when his play was beginning to fall off, Czechoslovakia, his second homeland, was faced with the growing threat from Nazi Germany. Flohr was a hero in Czechoslovakia, where chess was extremely popular. There were Flohr cigars, Flohr collars, Flohr pastries. With this support endangered, Flohr found it impossible to concentrate on his own growth as a chess master. His childhood had left psychological scars which he was unable to eradicate. And so he chose, unconsciously perhaps, the method most suited to keep him near enough to the top to make him feel safe; nothing else mattered. He was content to demonstrate himself equal to any master.

In his early days Flohr established a reputation as a master of the attack. Here are two beautiful victories from that golden epoch.

FLOHR **LANDAU**

Antwerp, 1930

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–B3
3 N–KB3 P–Q4
4 P–K3 P–K3
5 QN–Q2 B–K2

Too passive. 5 . . . B–Q3 is better to prepare . . . P–K4.

6 B–Q3 QN–Q2
7 O–O O–O
8 P–QN3 P–B4
9 B–N2 BPxP

Weak. 9 . . . P–QN3 is preferable.

10 KPxP PxP
11 PxP P–QN3

White is now ideally prepared for a K-side attack.

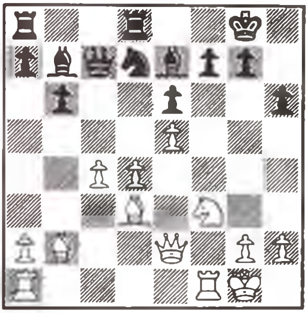
12 Q–B2 B–N2
13 N–K5 Q–B2
14 P–B4 KR–Q1
15 N(Q2)–B3 P–KR3

After 15 . . . N–B1 16 N–N5! wins a pawn.

16 Q–K2 NxN

If now 16 . . . N–B1 17 P–N4 gets the attack going.

17 BPxN N–Q2



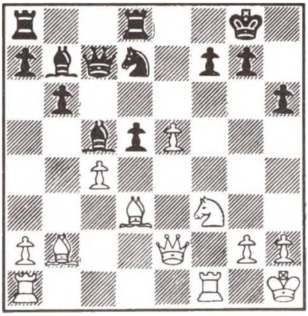
18 P–Q5!

Such a move can be played intuitively.

18 . . . B–B4ch

Or 18 . . . PxP 19 P–K6.

19 K–R1 PxP



20 N–N5!! N–B1

What else was there? If 20 . . . PxN 21 B–R7ch!! KxB 22 Q–R5ch K–N1 23 QxPch K–R2 24 R–B3.

21 NxP R–K1
22 Q–N4 R–K3

The threat was NxPch.

23 B–B5! QR–K1

Forced. On 23 . . . QxN 24 BxR QxB 25 RxNch! is decisive.

24 BxR RxB
25 N–Q6! BxN
26 PxB Q–Q2

There is no defense. If 26 . . . RxP 27 B–K5 wins.

27 B–R3!

With a most ingenious threat: RxNch, followed by QxR and P–Q7 dis ch.

27 . . . N–R2

To play . . . N–B3.

28 P–R3!

So that if 28 . . . N–B3 29 RxN!.

28 . . . PxP
29 QxP N–B3
30 RxN!

Of course.

30 . . . PxR
31 R–K1 B–B1

On 31 . . . K–B2 32 RxR QxR 33 Q–B7ch wins a piece (and Black has no perpetual).

32 R–QB1! B–N2
33 Q–N4ch K–R1
34 R–B7 R–K8ch
35 K–R2 QxQ
36 PxQ Resigns

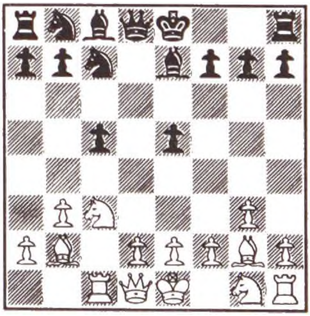
Flohr was not admitted to the Masters' Tournament at Hastings in 1930–31; he had to content himself with the Premier Reserves. But he still won the prettiest game of the Congress!

FLOHR RELLSTAB

Hastings, 1930–31

English Opening

1 P–QB4 P–QB4
2 N–QB3 N–KB3
3 P–KN3 P–Q4
4 PxP NxP
5 B–N2 N–B2
6 P–N3 P–K4
7 B–N2 B–K2
8 R–B1!



We really have a Sicilian Defense with colors reversed. Black has the better of it if he can consolidate his position, but the tactical question remains, can he?

8 . . . **O–O**

Better *8* . . . P–B3 to counter 9 N–R4 with . . . N–K3.

9 **N–R4** **N–Q2**
10 **N–KB3** **P–B3**
11 **Q–B2** **N–K3**

With the other Knight at Q2, this move is no longer so effective.

12 **N–R4!** **N–N3**
13 **N–B5!**

Excellent. He prepares an attack on both flanks.

13 . . . **NxN**
14 **PxN** **R–N1**

To play . . . P–QN3.

15 **P–B4!!**

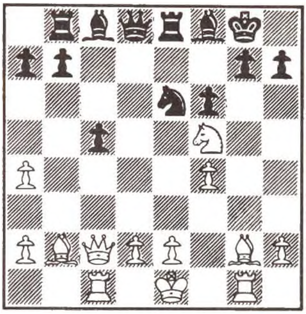
A most original conception. If now *15* . . . PxP *16* PxP NxP *17* Q–B4ch N–K3 *18* B–Q5 K–B2 White can regain his pawn by *19* NxP or play for the attack with *19* R–KN1.

15 . . . **PxP**
16 **PxP** **R–K1**
17 **R–KN1!**

As a result of his masterful handling of both wings, Flohr now has a powerful attack against the enemy King.

17 . . . **B–B1**

Again if *17* . . . NxP? *18* Q–B4ch N–K3 *19* B–Q5 wins (*19* . . . B–B1 *20* N–R6ch K–R1 *21* N–B7ch). *17* . . . K–R1, however, was the best try.



18 **B–B6!!**

Decisive. The immediate threat is not only BxR but the more important N–R6ch and N–B7ch.

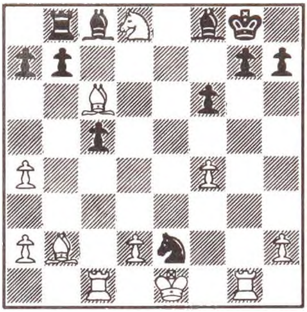
18 . . . **N–Q5**
19 **N–R6ch** **K–R1**
20 **N–B7ch** **K–N1**
21 **N–R6ch**

To gain time on the clock.

21 . . . **K–R1**
22 **N–B7ch** **K–N1**
23 **Q–B4!!**

Flohr is absolute master of the complications. The immediate threat is mate in two.

23 . . . **RxPch**
24 **QxR!!** **NxQ**
25 **NxQ**



25 . . . NxR(N8)

There was nothing better. If *25* . . . PxB 26 KxN RxB 27 R–N1! RxP 28 R–N8 with an easy win.

26 B–Q5ch K–R1
27 N–B7ch K–N1
28 K–B2! N–R6ch
29 K–N3!

And now Black's N is stuck. The rest is simple.

29 . . . P–QN4
30 PxP B–N2
31 B–B4 P–QR3
32 P–R4 PxP
33 PxP NxP

Desperation.

34 KxN P–R4
35 R–KN1 K–R2
36 BxP!! Resigns

A final pretty point. After 36 . . . PxB 37 B–Q3ch leads to mate.

Flohr's mastery of the endgame has rarely been equaled. Here is one of his most famous, against former world champion Botvinnik.

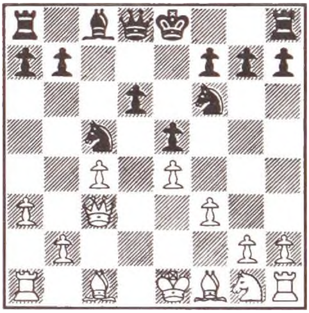
FLOHR **BOTVINNIK**

Match, 1933

Nimzo-Indian Defense

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 N–QB3 B–N5
4 Q–B2 P–B4
5 PxP N–R3
6 P–QR3 BxNch
7 QxB NxP
8 P–B3! P–Q3
9 P–K4 P–K4

To prevent P–K5.



White has emerged from the opening with a clear-cut advantage.

10 B–K3 Q–B2
11 N–K2 B–K3
12 Q–B2 O–O
13 N–B3 KR–B1

Botvinnik's only hope for counterplay lies in the QBP.

14 B–K2 P–QR3

To stop N–N5; if at once *14* . . . N(B4)–Q2 *15* N–N5 Q–N1 *16* R–Q1.

15 R–QB1 N(B4)–Q2
16 Q–Q2 Q–N1

Of course not . . . BxP? *17* N–Q5.

17 N–Q5

Playing for the endgame. On the alternative *17* P–QN3 N–B4 gives Black some counterplay.

17 . . . BxN
18 BPxB RxRch
19 QxR Q–Q1
20 O–O R–B1
21 Q–Q2 Q–B2
22 R–B1 QxRch
23 QxQ RxQch
24 BxR

White's only advantage lies in his two Bishops. Yet even against a lesser master Flohr would not be expected to win this position; that he does so against Botvinnik is a real tribute to his endgame skill.

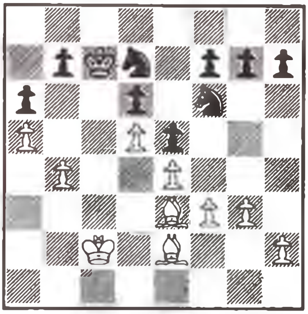
24 . . . K–B1
25 K–B2 K–K2
26 B–K3 K–Q1
27 K–K1 K–B2
28 K–Q2 N–B4
29 P–QN4

As a rule with the two Bishops any move to close the position must be made with caution. Nevertheless, the text is well timed; for if *29* . . . N–R5 *30* B–Q1 P–QN4 *31* BxN PxB *32* K–B3 K–N2 *33* K–B4 N–Q2 *34* P–N5 P–QR4 *35* P–N6! leads to a won ending for White.

29 . . . N(B4)–Q2
30 P–N3 N–N3
31 K–B2 N(N3)–Q2

But here . . . N–R5 was preferable.

32 P–QR4 N–N3
33 P–R5 N(N3)–Q2



White has conquered more space and strengthened his position. The next step is to seek points at which a breakthrough can be achieved.

34 B–QB1 K–Q1
35 B–N2 N–K1
36 K–Q2 N–B2
37 K–K3 K–K2
38 B–KB1 N–N4
39 P–R4 N–B2
40 B–KR3 N–K1
41 P–B4!

Threatening to win a pawn.

41 . . . P–B3
42 B–B5!

To further weaken the pawns.

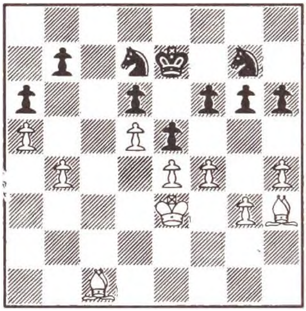
42 . . . P–KN3
43 B–KR3

Now P–B5 will be threatened under the proper circumstances.

43 . . . P–R3

To answer P–B5 with . . . P–KN4 without allowing White a passed pawn.

44 B–QB1 N–N2



45 PxP!

Surprising and pretty. If now 45 . . . NxP? 46 B–B8, and if 45 . . . BPxP 46 K–B3! P–R4 47 B–N5ch K–K1 48 B–R6! and White wins a piece—a most remarkable variation!

45 . . . QPxP

Thus this ugly reply is forced.

46 K–B3 P–R4
47 B–K3 K–Q3
48 B–R6 N–K1
49 P–N4 PxPch
50 BxP N–B2
51 B–K3 N–N4
52 K–K2 N–B2

Black has little choice; if 52 . . . N–Q5ch 53 BxN PxB 54 BxN KxB 55 K–Q3.

53 K–Q3

Threatening K–B4 followed by B–B5ch.

53 . . . P–B4

The only chance.

54 PxP PxP
55 BxP NxP
56 B–Q2 N(Q2)–B3
57 K–B4 K–B3
58 B–N6

To advance the RP. As a result of his maneuvering, White has the decisive outside passed pawn.

58 . . . P–N4ch
59 K–Q3 N–K2
60 B–K4ch!

The two Bishops are no longer important—the RP is now sufficient.

60 . . . N(K2)–Q4
61 B–N5! N–R4

If instead 61 . . . NxB 62 KxN NxP 63 P–R5 wins.

62 B–B3! N–N6
63 B–Q2!

Not P–R5 at once because of . . . P–K5ch. First the N must be driven.

63 . . . K–Q3
64 B–N4 N–B3

Offering the RP. If instead 64 . . . N–K2 65 P–R5.

65 B–B8 K–B3
66 B–K1

More precise than the immediate 66 BxP N–B4.

66	. . .	P–K5ch
67	K–Q4	N(N6)–R4
68	B–B5	

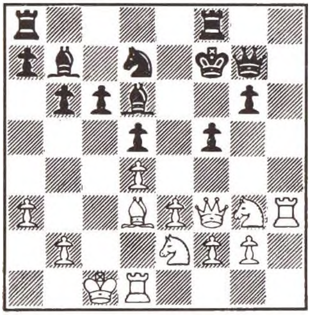
BxP can also be played.

68	. . .	K–Q3
69	B–Q2	Resigns

After the KP goes there is no real play left. One of the classic two-Bishop endings in chess history.

Here are a few more examples of Flohr's genius.

Sämisch



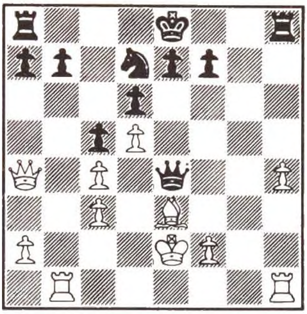
Flohr—TO PLAY

Rogaska-Slatina, 1929

The game that made Flohr famous.

1	BxP!	N–B3
2	N–B4	BxN
3	QxB	QR–K1
4	QR–R1	K–N1
5	R–R8ch	QxR
6	RxQch	KxR
7	Q–R6ch	K–N1
8	QxPch	K–R1
9	Q–R6ch	K–N1
10	N–R5! and wins.	

Flohr—TO PLAY

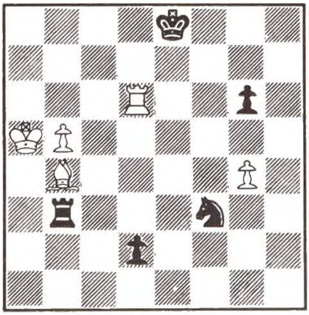


Blechschmidt

Zwickau, 1930

1	. . .	P–N4!!
2	QxNP	R–QN1!
3	Q–B6!	QxPch
4	K–B3	P–B4!!
5	RxRch	K–B2
6	B–Q4	N–K4ch!
7	BxN	Q–K5ch!
8	K–N3	Q–N5ch
9	K–R2	RxP mate

Flohr—TO PLAY AND DRAW



Sultan Khan

London, 1932

1 . . .	N–K4!

The only saving move in an apparently lost position.

2 BxP

The point is that if 2 K–R4 N–Q6 3 BxP N–B4ch 4 K–R5 N–N2ch and Black wins a Rook or draws by perpetual check.

2 . . .	N–B5ch
3 K–R4	NxR
4 KxR	NxP
Drawn	

Isaac Kashdan

Next to Flohr the most likely challenger for Alekhine's crown in the early 1930s was the American, Isaac Kashdan. This was a novelty, since he was the first American since Marshall to achieve any prominence in the international arena. There was no question in anybody's mind that had he played a match with Marshall in 1931 or 1932 Kash would have won the title; but those were depression years and it could not be arranged. Kashdan's superiority, however, was recognized in that he was placed on first board in the team tournaments. (Author)

Kashdan was the strongest American player for three or four years; then he was outdistanced by Reshevsky and Fine. His play was solid, unspectacular, yet thorough. What he lacked was knowledge of the openings and the willingness to risk tactical adventures; eventually, in spite of his comprehensive grasp of the game, his overcautiousness began to take its toll.

At his best Kashdan was nicknamed "The Little Capablanca" because of his great emphasis on position play and endgame technique. Here is one of the games which earned him this nickname.

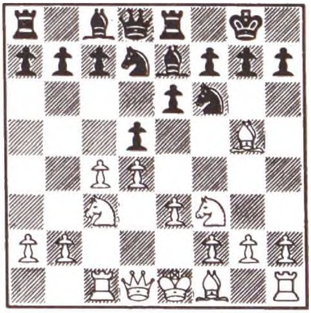
RELLSTAB **KASHDAN**

Stockholm, 1930

Queen's Gambit Declined

1	P–Q4	N–KB3
2	P–QB4	P–K3
3	N–QB3	P–Q4
4	B–N5	QN–Q2
5	P–K3	B–K2
6	N–B3	O–O
7	R–B1	R–K1

More precise is 7 . . . P–B3.



8 B–Q3

Better is 8 P–B5!, for if then 8 . . . P–B3 9 B–KB4 with a strong bind.

8 . . . PxP
9 BxP P–QR3
10 B–Q3 P–B4
11 O–O PxP
12 NxP

White plays with too passive a spirit. PxP! was more aggressive.

12 . . . N–K4
13 B–N1

Now the attack is misplaced. Better 13 B–K2.

13 . . . Q–R4
14 Q–R4

Playing for a draw, but he underrates Kashdan's endgame skill.

14 . . . QxQ
15 NxQ

In the pre-Capablanca days, such positions were almost automatically considered draws; Capa showed how many hidden potentialities lay in them. Kashdan, as the sequel shows, was also a past master at such positions.

15 . . . N(K4)–Q2!!

Threatening . . . P–QN4 and . . . B–N2, with a free game.

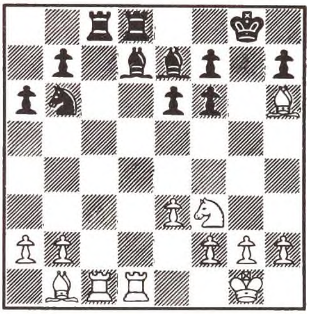
16 N–QB3

So that if 16 . . . P–QN4 17 N–B6.

16 . . . N–N3
17 KR–Q1 B–Q2
18 N–B3 R(K1)–Q1
19 N–K4 QR–B1
20 NxNch?

Overlooking the strength of Black's reply.

20 . . . PxN!
21 B–R6



21 . . . N–R5!

Forcing an entry.

22 RxR BxR!
23 RxRch BxR
24 P–QN3 N–B6
25 N–Q2

The only way to hold the pawn.

25 . . . B–Q2
26 P–QR3

To free the Bishop.

26 . . . P–QN4!
27 B–Q3

If instead 27 P–QN4 P–QR4 28 PxP BxP 29 B–Q3 B–B2! and . . . B–Q3, winning a pawn.

27 . . . P–R4
28 P–K4 B–K2

Cashing in on his profound strategy; Black now wins a pawn.

29 N–B3

Or 29 B–K3 BxP 30 B–Q4 B–N7 31 BxBP N–K7ch 32 BxN BxB followed by advance of the QRP wins.

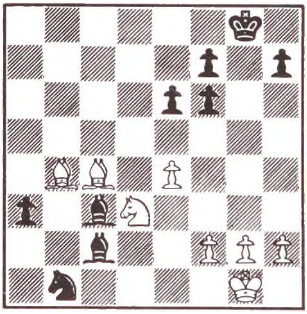
29 . . .	BxP
30 B–Q2	B–N7
31 N–Q4	P–R5

Decisive.

32 PxP

A pretty alternative is 32 BxN BxB 33 NxNP BxN 34 BxB P–R6! and queens.

32 . . .	PxP
33 N–B2	N–N8!
34 B–N4	P–R6
35 B–B4	B–R5
36 N–K1	B–B6!
37 N–Q3	B–B7



White is completely bottled up. There is no defense against the threat of . . . BxN and . . . P–R7.

38 P–B3	P–R7
Resigns	

Kashdan first attracted international attention by his play at the team tournament in Hamburg, 1930. Here is his best game from that event.

STAHLBERG KASHDAN

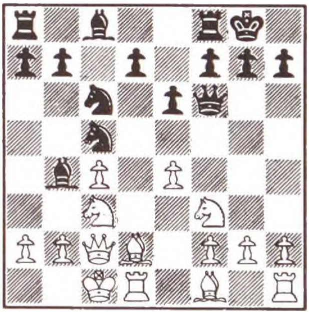
Hamburg, 1930

Nimzo-Indian Defense

1 P–Q4	N–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 N–QB3	B–N5
4 Q–N3	P–B4
5 PxP	N–B3
6 N–B3	N–K5
7 B–Q2	NxQBP
8 Q–B2	O–O
9 P–K4?	

An error which is most instructively punished. P–QR3 is correct.

9 . . .	Q–B3!
10 O–O–O!	



10 . . .	P–QN3!

Black cannot afford to win the pawn with 10 . . . BxN 11 BxB Q–B5ch 12 N–Q2! QxBP?, for after 13 P–QN4! he loses a piece. Now he does threaten it because the Knight can return to N2.

11 **B–Q3**

Unappetizing, but forced.

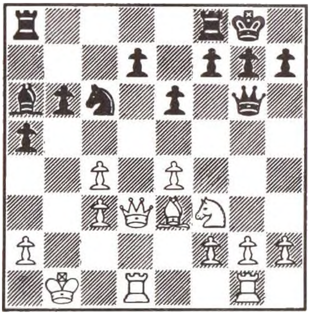
11 **. . .** **P–QR4!**
12 **K–N1** **Q–N3**
13 **KR–N1**

White's pieces are bottled up. *13* P–QR3? would threaten nothing.

13 **. . .** **B–R3**
14 **B–K3**

A desperate attempt to free himself.

14 **. . .** **NxB**
15 **QxN** **BxN**
16 **PxB**



16 **. . .** **P–Q4!**

A pretty deciding move.

17 **KPxP** **QxQch**
18 **RxQ** **BxP**
19 **R–Q2** **BxQP**
20 **BxP** **KR–N1**
21 **R–N2** **P–R5!**

The real point of the combination. If now *22* B–B5 P–R6! *23* RxRch RxRch *24* K–R1 R–N7! and wins.

22 **B–B7** **R–QB1**
23 **B–B4** **N–R4**
24 **R–QB1**

Losing neatly. *24* N–Q2 RxP loses more slowly.

24 **. . .** **B–K5ch**
25 **K–R1** **N–N6ch!**
Resigns

Edgar Colle

While he was never a serious contender for the world championship, the Belgian master, Edgar Colle, was one of the tournament stalwarts of the Alekhine era. He is best known for the opening named after him, the Colle System, which, as he showed, packs a terrific wallop in spite of its placidity. Colle was primarily an attacking player; here is one of his most brilliant efforts.

COLLE **GRUENFELD**

Berlin, 1926
Queen's Indian Defense

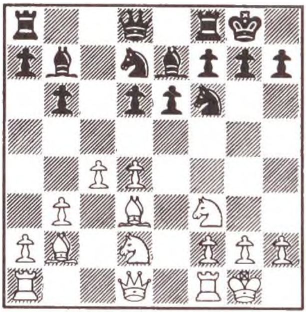
1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 N–KB3 P–K3
3 P–K3 P–QN3

Avoiding the Colle System proper, which arises after 3 . . . P–Q4.

4 B–Q3 B–N2
5 QN–Q2 P–B4
6 O–O B–K2
7 P–QN3 PxP

Weakening.

8 PxP P–Q3
9 B–N2 QN–Q2
10 P–B4 O–O



Colle could pull the most brilliant combinations out of placid positions of this sort.

11 R–B1 R–K1
12 R–K1 Q–B2

Loss of time.

13 Q–K2 QR–B1
14 N–B1 Q–N1
15 N–N3 Q–R1
16 N–N5!

On *16* . . . BxP he intends *17* P–B3 P–KR3 *18* NxBP!.

16 . . . P–N3?

Evidently believing the sacrifice unsound. Better was *16* . . . N–B1.

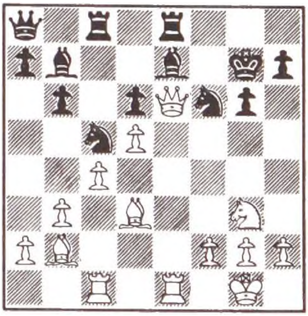
17 NxBP! #(Kreach)

This offer, which occurred so often in Colle's games, was the hidden point of his system.

17 . . . KxN
18 QxPch K–N2

On *18* . . . K–B1 *19* P–Q5 N–B4 *20* Q–K3 NxB *21* QxN N–Q2 *22* R–K6 N–B4 *23* Q–Q4 NxR *24* PxN wins.

19 P–Q5! N–B4

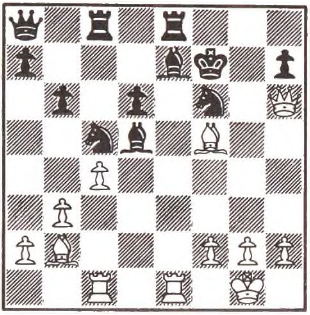


20 N–B5ch!! K–B1

After *20* . . . PxN *21* QxBP Black's position rapidly disintegrates.

21 Q-K3! PxN
22 Q-R6ch K-B2
23 BxP! BxP

Desperation.



24 RxBch! RxR
25 QxNch K-K1
26 Q-R8ch K-B2
27 BxR Resigns

Lajos Steiner

The Hungarian, Lajos Steiner, came from a family of chess masters. His father was a well-known Budapest master in the years before the First World War; his brother, Endre, was a master who was strong enough to take part in international tournaments. Lajos rarely managed to win top honors, but he was renowned for his ability to topple the great, and for the creative intuition which he so often displays in his play. Before World War II he moved to Australia where he settled down to his profession of engineering.

L. STEINER KERES

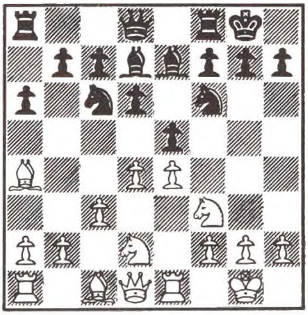
Warsaw Team Tourney, 1935

Ruy Lopez

1 P-K4 P-K4
2 N-KB3 N-QB3
3 B-N5 P-QR3
4 B-R4 N-B3
5 O-O P-Q3
6 P-B3 B-Q2

Black can also play . . . NxP.

7 R-K1 B-K2
8 P-Q4 O-O
9 QN-Q2



9 . . . PxP?

A risky maneuver which is efficiently punished.

10	PxP	N–QN5
11	P–Q5!	N–Q6
12	R–K3	BxB
13	QxB	N–B4
14	Q–B2	N–N5
15	R–K2	R–K1
16	P–KR3	N–K4
17	NxN	PxN
18	N–B4	

White has a solid position with considerable potential pressure on the Q-side. Keres therefore decides to try something.

18	. . .	P–B4!?
19	PxP	P–K5
20	N–K3	B–Q3

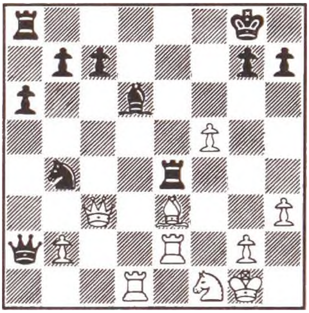
Evidently hoping for an eventual K-side attack.

21	B–Q2	N–Q6
22	N–B1	Q–B3
23	P–B3!	Q–Q5ch
24	B–K3	QxQP
25	R–Q1!	

Black's pieces are badly tied up. If here 25 . . . PxP? 26 PxP! wins the N.

25	. . .	QxRP
26	PxP	N–N5
27	Q–B3	RxP?

Loses nicely, but on the alternative 27 . . . N–B3 28 B–B2 followed by N–K3–B4 preserves the pressure.



28	RxB!!	R–QB5

The point is that if instead 28 . . . PxR 29 B–R6! decides.

29	Q–K5	PxR
30	Q–K6ch	K–R1
31	P–B6	

Now the attack is decisive.

31	. . .	R–B2
32	QxP	Q–B5
33	R–KB2	R–B2
34	R–B4	Q–B3
35	PxPch!	RxP

Equally useless is 35 . . . KxP 36 B–Q4ch.

36	R–B8ch	Resigns

It is mate after 36 . . . RxR 37 QxRch R–N1 38 B–Q4ch.

Sultan Khan

The appearance of an Indian on the tournament scene was one of the sensations of the early 1930s. Sultan (a first name, not a title) was a serf on the estate of an Indian Maharajah, who was impressed by his extraordinary ability at chess. His master took him to England, where Sultan Khan had to learn the European rules, which were not adhered to in

India. In spite of this handicap, his native genius was such that he soon became British champion. When the Maharajah returned to India Sultan Khan went with him and has not been heard from since.

Because he had to relearn the rules, his games often had a peculiar appearance. Here is one of his best efforts.

SOULTANBIEV SULTAN KHAN

Liege, 1930

Queen's Indian Defense

1	P–Q4	N–KB3
2	N–KB3	P–QN3
3	P–B4	P–K3
4	P–KN3	B–N2
5	B–N2	B–N5ch
6	B–Q2	BxBch
7	QNxB	

Better is 7 QxB.

7	. . .	O–O
8	O–O	P–B4

Sultan Khan handles the positional maneuvering with admirable skill.

9	Q–B2	N–B3
10	PxP	PxP
11	P–K4??	

A positional blunder which opens the Q5 square to Black.

11	. . .	Q–B2
12	KR–K1	P–Q3
13	QR–B1	P–KR3
14	P–QR3	N–Q2
15	Q–B3	

Hoping to be able to play P–QN4.

15	. . .	P–QR4
16	N–R4	P–N4
17	Q–K3	

Planning on *17* . . . PxN *18* QxP, with a complicated attack.

17	. . .	Q–Q1!

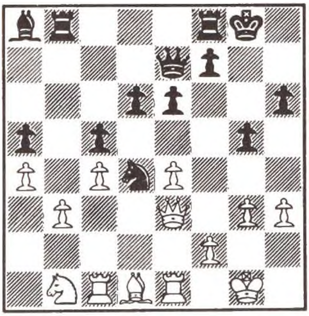
Rightly refusing the sacrifice since his game is positionally won.

18	N(R4)–B3	Q–K2
19	P–R3	QR–N1
20	P–N3	B–R1
21	N–N1	N(Q2)–K4
22	P–QR4	

Afraid of . . . P–R5. White flounders aimlessly, while Sultan Khan continually strengthens his position.

22	. . .	NxNch
23	BxN	N–Q5
24	B–Q1	

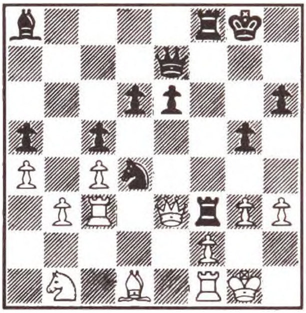
He must prevent . . . N–B7.



24	. . .	P–B4!

Decisive. The lines are now opened for the concluding attack.

25 PxP RxBP
26 R-B3 R(N1)-KB1
27 R-KB1 R-B6!!



The finish is pretty. If in reply 28 Q-Q2 Q-QN2! leads to mate.

28 BxR RxB
Resigns

For on 29 Q-Q2, Black can win with either 29 . . . RxR! or . . . Q-QN2.

Erich Eliskases

The Austrian master Erich Eliskases started in the early 1930s, though his great success came at Noordwijk in 1938, where he took first prize. After World War II he settled in Argentina and Brazil, where he did much to enrich their chess lives.

Eliskases first rose to prominence with a victory over Spielmann in a match in 1932. The most brilliant game of that match is an enduring masterwork.

SPIELMANN ELISKASES

7th Match Game, 1932
Queen's Gambit Declined

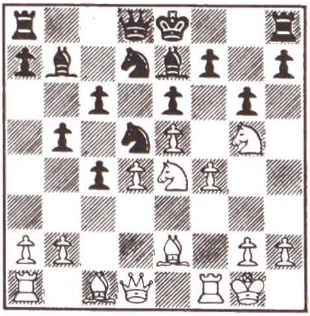
1 P-Q4 P-Q4
2 N-KB3 P-K3
3 P-B4 P-QB3
4 N-B3 PxP
5 P-K4

A gambitlike variation which Spielmann was fond of.

5 . . . P-QN4
6 P-K5 B-N2
7 B-K2 N-K2
8 N-K4 N-Q4
9 O-O N-Q2
10 KN-N5 B-K2
11 P-B4

Intending P-B5.

11 . . . P-N3



12 P-B5!?

Typical Spielmann—it might have worked against a lesser master.

12 . . . KPxP

Traps are numerous! If *12* . . . NPxP *13* NxKP! wins beautifully; e.g., *13* . . . PxN(K3) *14* B–R5ch K–B1 *15* B–R6ch K–N1 *16* Q–N4ch!! PxQ *17* B–B7 mate.

13 P–K6 PxP
14 NxKP Q–N3
15 P–QR4

Fumbling for a combination. If *15* RxP!? P–B4! wins.

15 . . . PxN!
16 P–R5 Q–R3
17 Q–B2 N(Q2)–B3
18 RxN! BxR!!
19 QxKP

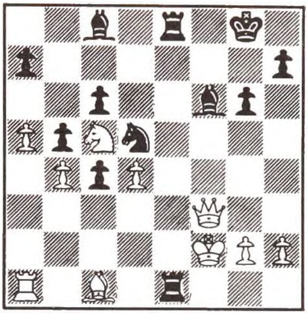
Winning the Queen . . . and losing the game. Black's defense is superb.

19 . . . K–B2!
20 N–B5 QR–K1
21 Q–B3 RxB!!

The point. If 22 QxR? BxPch saves everything. Black now gets Rook and two pieces for the Queen, or a potent counterattack.

22 NxQ R–K8ch
23 K–B2 R(R1)–K1
24 N–B5 B–B1
25 P–QN4 K–N1

Black has Rook, Bishop, and pawn for the Queen—quite sufficient in this position. White has no more good moves.



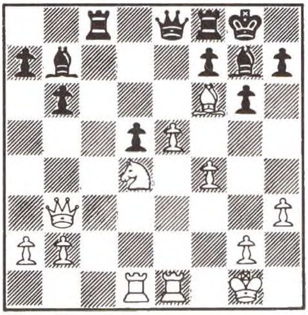
26 B–N2 R(K8)–K6
27 Q–Q1 P–B6
28 B–B1 P–B7!
29 QxP R–K7ch!
30 QxR BxPch
31 B–K3 RxB

Finis. If in reply 32 QxR BxQch 33 K–B3 NxP! and it is all over.

32 Q–B1 R–QR6ch
Resigns

Here is a pretty finish from another of Eliskases' games.

Bogolyubov



Eliskases—TO PLAY

Match Game, 1939

1 N-B5! Resigns

For if 1 . . . PxN 2 Q-N3 mates. On other moves Black loses the exchange.

The Swedish School

While Sweden and the Scandinavian countries in general have long been important chess centers, it was not until the 1930s that they produced a number of masters of international stature. Most prominent among them were Stoltz and Stahlberg, who led the Swedish team in its outstanding showing at international team tournaments.

Stoltz was alwavs brilliant and erratic. Here is his most famous game, in which he unseats a great tactician.

SPIELMANN STOLTZ

Stockholm, 1931

French Defense

1 P-K4 P-K3
2 P-Q4 P-Q4
3 N-Q2 N-KB3
4 P-K5 KN-Q2
5 B-Q3 P-QB4
6 P-QB3 N-QB3
7 N-K2 Q-N3

In this variation Black must smash White's pawn center quickly.

8 N-B3 PxP
9 PxP B-N5ch
10 K-B1 P-B3
11 N-B4

Spielmann, as usual, attacks.

11 . . . PxP!

A most ingenious defense.

12 NxP(K6) P-K5
13 B-KB4

The attack seems overwhelming, but Black has surprises in store.

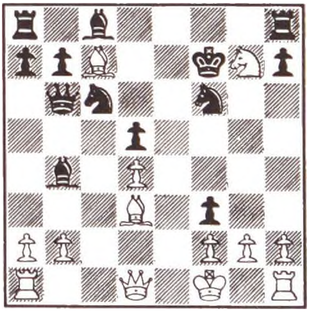
13 . . . PxN!!

A Queen sacrifice . . . is it sound?

14 B-B7

Accept it and see.

14 . . . N-B3
15 NxPch K-B2



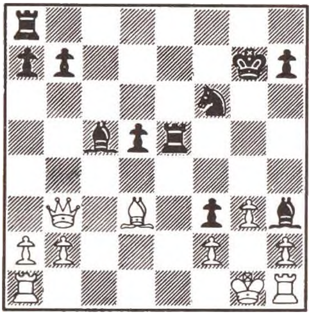
16 BxQ B-N5

An extraordinarily complicated position in which both sides must rely on intuition. But post-mortem analysis has never demonstrated a really satisfactory defense for White.

17 P–KN3	B–R6ch
18 K–N1	KxN
19 B–B7	KR–K1
20 B–K5	

Better 20 QxP, but White is naturally anxious to exchange pieces.

20 . . .	NxB
21 PxN	RxP
22 Q–N3	B–QB4!!

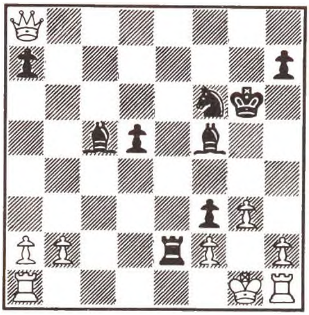


An astounding position. Black, already a Queen behind, blithely offers another Rook. Shudders must have gone through Spielmann at the sight of this usurpation of his style.

23 B–B5

To deflect the Bishop. If 23 QxPch R–K2 24 QxR N–N5! 25 R–KB1 NxBP and wins. And on 23 B–B1 BxPch! 24 KxB N–K5ch is decisive.

23 . . .	BxB
24 QxPch	K–N3
25 QxR	R–K7!



Black has a mating attack in spite of his material handicap.

26 P–KR4

Despair. On 26 R–KB1 B–KR6! and there is no defense; e.g., 27 Q–B6 BxPch 28 RxB R–K8ch and mate next.

26 . . .	BxPch
27 K–B1	B–Q6

Threatening mate.

28 P–R5ch	K–N4
Resigns	

A most remarkable position. There is no defense against the discovered check. If 29 R–Q1 R–Q7 mate. It is easier to compose such positions than to produce them over the board!

Gideon Stahlberg

After the team tournament of 1939 in Buenos Aires, Stahlberg settled in Argentina. Here is his finest game from down south.

PILNIK **STAHLBERG**

Mar del Plata, 1943

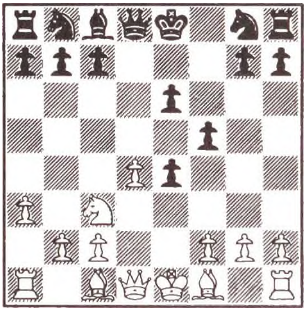
French Defense

1	P–K4	P–K3

Stahlberg's favorite defense.

2	P–Q4	P–Q4
3	N–QB3	B–N5
4	N–K2	PxP
5	P–QR3	BxNch
6	NxB	P–KB4

A defense considered bad since Alekhine's sensational victory against Nimzovich at San Remo in 1930. But Stahlberg has some improvements up his sleeve.



7	B–KB4	

Alekhine had played 7 P–B3, but after 7 . . . PxP 8 QxP Q–R5ch! gives Black an adequate defense.

7	. . .	N–KB3
8	Q–Q2	O–O
9	O–O–O	N–R4
10	B–B4	N–QB3
11	N–K2?	

Here he should have proceeded to open the KN-file with *11* P–B3!. After *11* . . . PxP *12* PxP NxB *13* QxN Q–Q3 *14* Q–K3 K–R1 *15* P–B4 White has attacking possibilities.

11	. . .	N–K2!
12	P–KB3	NxB
13	NxN	N–Q4
14	P–KN3	Q–Q3!

An active defense, even if it involves return of the extra material.

15	PxP	PxP
16	N–N2	

White seems to be pulling out, but he is in for a surprise!

16	. . .	P–QN4!
17	B–N3?	

Too timid. With *17* BxP! he can hold the position satisfactorily.

17	. . .	B–N2
18	KR–K1	P–QR4
19	RxP	P–R5
20	BxN	

Dire necessity. On 20 B–R2 N–B6! wins the exchange.

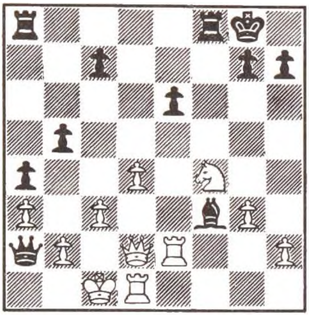
20	. . .	QxB
21	R–K2	Q–R7

With this penetration the game is virtually decided.

22	P–B3	B–B6

Black wins the exchange, but even more important is the strengthening of the attack.

23 N-B4



23 . . .	P-N5!!

A pretty surprise.

24 RPxP

If 24 BPxP RxN! 25 PxR Q-B5ch and Black emerges a piece ahead.

24 . . .	P-R6
25 PxP	QxPch
26 Q-N2	

Loses a piece, but there was nothing to be done. On 26 K-B2 Q-R3! wins.

26 . . .	RxN
27 PxR	BxR
28 QxQ	RxQ
29 K-N2	RxP
30 R-K1	R-K6
31 R-QB1	B-B6
32 RxP	B-Q4
Resigns	

Sir George Thomas

After Yates, Sir George was England's major representative in international competition. Although not on a par with Blackburne and Burn, he was always a dangerous opponent. His great success came at Hastings, 1934, where he tied for first with Flohr and Capablanca, ahead of Botvinnik and others. Here is one of his most elegant efforts.

THOMAS FLOHR

Margate, 1939

Ruy Lopez

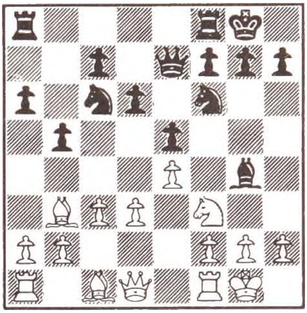
1 P-K4	P-K4
2 N-KB3	N-QB3
3 B-N5	P-QR3
4 B-R4	N-B3
5 O-O	B-K2
6 N-B3	

An older line, rarely seen nowadays. Flohr is evidently not too familiar with it and does not defend well.

6 . . .	P-QN4
7 B-N3	P-Q3
8 N-Q5!	B-N5

Not the best; 8 . . . N-QR4 equalizes more easily. On 8 . . . NxP 9 NxB NxN 10 P-Q4 gives White a strong attack for the pawn.

9 NxB	QxN
10 P-B3	O-O
11 P-Q3	



As a result of his opening maneuvering White has gained the advantage of the two Bishops.

11 . . . N–QR4
12 B–B2 P–B4
13 P–KR3 B–R4
14 Q–K2 N–Q2
15 Q–K3!

Releases the pin.

15 . . . N–QB3
16 N–R2 N–N3?

A very careless move which is promptly punished.

17 P–QN4! QR–N1
18 P–R3 KR–B1
19 PxP PxP
20 P–KB4!

Black has been thoroughly outplayed, and White now has the initiative on both sides of the board.

20 . . . PxP
21 QxKBP N–K4
22 Q–N3! B–N3

He had to guard against R–B5.

23 B–B4 N(N3)–Q2
24 N–N4 R–K1
25 N–K3!

Well played. On the tempting 25 NxN NxN 26 P–Q4?, Black can reply 26 . . . PxP! 27 PxP QR–B1!.

25 . . . R(N1)–B1
26 N–Q5 Q–Q1
27 P–QR4!

With everything else temporarily stablized he creates new threats.

27 . . . P–N5
28 P–R5!

Fixing Black's QRP as a target.

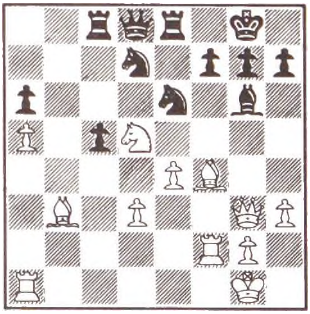
28 . . . PxP
29 NxP N–QB3
30 N–Q5

Preventing . . . NxP.

30 . . . N–Q5
31 R–B2 N–K3

He had to stop B–B7.

32 B–N3



Threatening B–B4, which would prove decisive.

32	. . .	P–B5

The best chance.

33	BxP	BxP
34	N–K3!	B–N3

Forced, for if 34 . . . B–N2 35 N–B5, threatening BxN, is decisive.

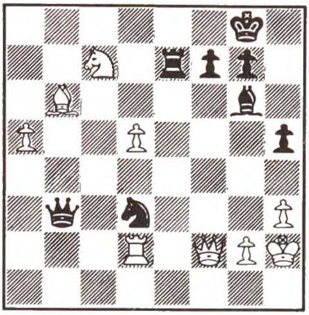
35	BxP	R–R1
36	B–QN5	N–Q5
37	B–B7	Q–K2
38	BxN	QxB
39	B–N6	N–N6
40	R–R3	N–B8
41	P–Q4	

The complications are temporarily calm. White's pawn plus is secure, but the situation is still fluid and there are many technical difficulties.

41	. . .	N–Q6
42	R–Q2	Q–N4
43	K–R2	P–R4
44	N–Q1	

To chase the Knight away.

44	. . .	N–B8
45	R–K3	RxR
46	QxR	R–K1
47	R–N2!	Q–B3
48	Q–QB3	Q–Q3ch
49	Q–N3	Q–Q4
50	N–B3	Q–KB4
51	N–N5	Q–B8
52	Q–B2	Q–Q8
53	R–Q2	Q–N6
54	N–B7	R–K2
55	P–Q5	N–Q6



56	P–Q6!	

Very pretty. If 56 . . . R–Q2 57 Q–Q4 followed by P–R6 with an easy win.

56	. . .	NxQ
57	PxR	P–B3
58	RxN	

White has Rook and Knight for the Queen and will soon win the Bishop.

58	. . .	Q–N5

There is no defense: on 58 . . . Q–R5 59 P–R6 decides.

59	P–K8=Qch	BxQ
60	NxB	P–R5
61	N–B7	K–B2
62	K–N1	K–N3
63	N–Q5	Q–R6
64	N–K3	K–B2
65	R–B1	P–N3

Black is lost anyhow, but this hastens the end.

66	N–N4	P–B4
67	N–K5ch	K–B3
68	B–Q4!	Resigns

The American World Championship Teams

Prior to World War II the U.S. had never been a strong chess country. Most of its strength was in fact confined to New York, with only a sprinkling of masters in other parts of the country. Nevertheless, in four world championship team tournaments, at Prague in 1931, Folkestone in 1933, Warsaw in 1935, and Stockholm in 1937, it succeeded in capturing first prize each time. In the last pre-World War II team tournament, at Buenos Aires in 1939, another U.S. victory was probable, but financing could not be found to send a team. In that period the Soviet Union did not take part in the team tournaments, somewhat contemptuously referring to them as "international" tournaments, the quotes giving expression to their belief that the nations should not be considered truly independent; this propaganda line changed after the war. Since Botvinnik was the only Soviet grandmaster before World War II, Soviet participation probably would not have affected the American victories.

Apart from Marshall, who remained the dean of American chess until his death in 1943, the leading American players were first Kashdan, later Fine and Reshevsky. But a number of others assumed prominence.

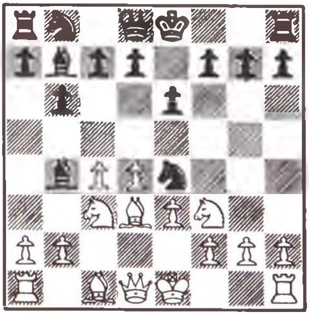
Arnold Denker

After Kashdan, Reshevsky, and Fine, the first American master to enter international competition abroad was Arnold Denker. Denker won the U.S. Championship in 1944 and held the title for two years. His style is bold and forceful; he invariably plays for a winning attack. This has led to some brilliant achievements, though it has hampered his all-round development. In the following historic game, which clinched the title for him, we see him at his best.

DENKER **FINE**

U.S. Championship
New York, 1944
Nimzo-Indian Defense

1	P–Q4	N–KB3
2	P–QB4	P–K3
3	N–QB3	B–N5
4	P–K3	P–QN3
5	B–Q3	B–N2
6	N–B3	N–K5



7 O–O!

An ingenious pawn sacrifice, difficult to meet in over-the-board play.

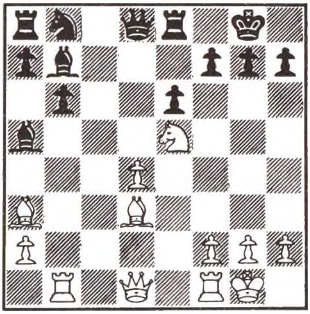
7 . . . NxN

Black can safely decline the pawn with 7 . . . BxN 8 PxB P–KB4, but he was playing to win.

8 PxN BxP
9 R–N1 B–R4

Not 9 . . . O–O? 10 Q–B2.

10 B–R3 P–Q3
11 P–B5! O–O
12 PxQP PxP
13 P–K4 R–K1
14 P–K5 PxP
15 NxP



White's threats are already beginning to mount. The most immediate is 16 BxPch followed by Q–R5ch.

15 . . . Q–N4?

The decisive mistake. After 15 . . . P–N3 Black's defensive resources are adequate.

16 P–N3 P–N3

Black is in hot water. On the more obvious 16 . . . N–B3? either 17 P–R4! or 17 NxP! wins.

17 Q–R4! Q–Q1

The only hope.

18 KR–B1 P–QN4

A desperate try. On other moves Black is lost. The prettiest variation is 18 . . . N–R3 19 QxB! PxQ 20 RxB with a winning attack.

19 BxQNP Q–Q4
20 P–B3 B–N3

Hoping for 21 BxR QxN.

21 R–B5!! BxR?

Loses immediately. There was still a lot of play left after 21 . . . QxRP! 22 BxR QxRch 23 R–B1 Q–B4 24 BxPch K–N2.

22 BxB R–KB1
23 B–B4!

Winning a piece.

23 . . . B–B3
24 BxQ BxQ
25 BxQR Resigns

Herman Steiner

Hungarian-born Herman Steiner was long one of the most popular and colorful figures in American chess. In 1932 he settled in Los Angeles, where his chess club has attracted many of the celebrities of movieland. In 1948 he won the U.S. Championship.

Steiner had an eclectic style. He was at his best in an aggressive defense, as in the following game.

KASHDAN STEINER

New York, 1942

Ruy Lopez

1	P–K4	P–K4
2	N–KB3	N–QB3
3	B–N5	P–QR3
4	B–R4	N–B3
5	O–O	P–QN4
6	B–N3	B–K2
7	P–QR4	R–QN1

Black is heading for a prepared variation.

8	PxP	PxP
9	Q–K2	O–O
10	P–B3	P–Q4!

A familiar idea in an unfamiliar setting. The pawn cannot be accepted because White is exposed to too strong an attack; e.g., *11* PxP NxP *12* NxP N–B5 *13* Q–K4 NxN *14* P–Q4 NxP!, devastating White's position.

11	P–Q3	P–Q5

With a cute idea . . .

12 PxP?

. . . which White does not see. *12* QN–Q2! was correct and good enough to keep the initiative at any rate.

12 . . . B–KN5

The point. At the cost of an insignificant pawn Black disrupts White's position.

13 P–Q5

Accepting the challenge, since the alternative *13* PxP is most certainly worse.

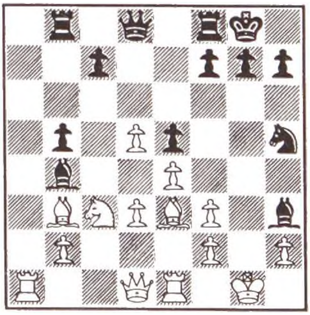
13	. . .	N–Q5
14	Q–Q1	N–R4!
15	B–K3	

The pin is choking him, and there is no time to be lost in getting rid of it. On *15* QN–Q2 N–B5 should win.

15	. . .	NxNch
16	PxN	B–KR6
17	R–K1	B–QN5

To gain a tempo and clear the road to the K-side for the Queen.

18 N–B3



18 . . . **N–B5**

The continuation of the attack by Black involves getting to the K-side "fustest with the mostest" wood. With the text he eventually wins the exchange, but, as is often the case in an attack, material gain reduces speed and affords the defender counterchances. However, there is nothing better, for on *18* . . . Q–R5 *19* K–R1 provides an adequate defense.

19 **BxN** **PxB**
20 **K–R1** **R–N3**

Getting thar fustest. . . .

21 **R–KN1** **BxN**
22 **PxB** **Q–R5**
23 **R–N2!!**

He remains cool under fire. By giving up the exchange he hopes to take the sting out of Black's attack.

23 . . . **R–KR3**

Too uncertain. As a rule, the capture of material stops an attack and transforms the problem into one of technique. Here Steiner must have been convinced that the rule held and accordingly preferred to postpone the gain of the exchange. Yet analysis reveals that *23* . . . BxRch would not have slowed Black down appreciably and would have concluded more effectively than the text. After *23* . . . BxRch *24* KxB R–N3ch *25* K–B1 QxRP *26* K–K2 R–N7 *27* Q–B1, White's position can be pried open with *27* . . . P–N4!.

24 **Q–KN1** **BxRch**
25 **QxB** **R–KN3**
26 **Q–B1** **Q–R4!**
27 **B–Q1**

Forced, for if 27 Q–K2 R–KR3 mates.

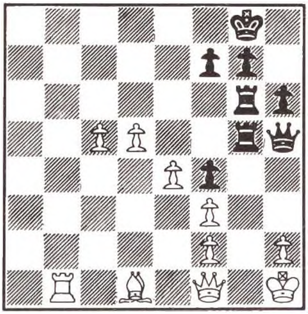
27 . . . **R–B1?**

Losing a vital tempo. *27* . . . P–QB3 at once was essential.

28 **R–R5!** **P–QB3**
29 **PxP** **R(N3)xP**
30 **P–B4!** **R–B4**
31 **P–Q4** **R–N4**
32 **P–B5** **P–R3**
33 **RxP** **R–R1**

Threatening . . . R–R8 followed by . . . RxB!, or . . . QxBPch, or even . . . Q–R6!.

34 **R–N1** **R–R3**
35 **P–Q5** **R(R3)–N3**



36 **P–B6??**

A blunder in a difficult position. With *36* B–K2! he could still have drawn, even though the Queen goes. The main variation runs 36 B–K2 Q–R5 37 P–R3 R–R4 38 K–R2 R–N6! 39 PxR! QxNPch *40* K–R1 RxPch *41* QxR QxQch *42* K–N1, and now Black is stopped because of White's powerful passed pawns. The best he can do is draw by perpetual check.

36 . . . **Q–R6!!**

For if 37 QxQ R–N8 mate. Now it is all over.

37 **B–K2** **R–N7**
38 **Q–N1** **RxQch**
39 **RxR** **RxRch**
40 **KxR** **Q–B1**
41 **B–N5** **Q–B2**
Resigns

Israel A. Horowitz

Al Horowitz was known not only for his over-the-board exploits but also for his magazine, the *Chess Review*, the leading American chess journal, which later merged with *U.S. Chess Life* and became the official journal of the U.S. Chess Federation. Horowitz played on a number of American teams and was one of the leading American masters from the 1920s until his death in 1973. Here is his most famous game, which was awarded a special prize.

HOROWITZ FLOHR

Radio Match:
U.S.A.–U.S.S.R., 1945
Caro-Kann Defense

1 **P–K4** **P–QB3**
2 **P–Q4** **P–Q4**
3 **N–QB3** **PxP**
4 **NxP** **N–B3**
5 **NxNch** **NPxN**

The alternative 5 . . . KPxN has always been considered safer, but some new attacking lines have been developed against it.

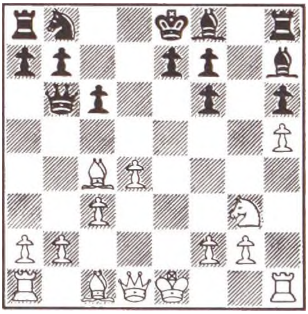
6 **N–K2!**

An excellent idea. White's purpose is to deprive Black's QB of good squares, and that purpose is soon accurately realized.

6 . . . **B–B4**
7 **N–N3** **B–N3**
8 **P–KR4** **P–KR3**
9 **P–R5** **B–R2**
10 **P–QB3** **Q–N3**

Playing for some counterattack on the Queenside.

11 **B–QB4!**



While Black's pieces are disjointed, White develops normally and soon has some major threats.

11 . . . **N–Q2**

Planning to play . . . P–K3 and castle on the Queenside.

12 P–R4!

To create a weakness there and thus prevent Black's King from finding a safe haven.

12 . . . P–R4

Stops P–R5, but White has achieved what he wanted, since it is now dangerous for Black to castle long.

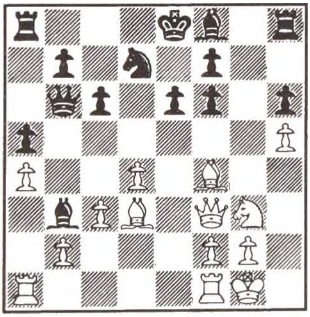
13 Q–B3 P–K3
14 O–O B–B7

Hoping to get this Bishop into the game more effectively.

15 B–B4!

The NP is artificially defended: if *15* . . . QxNP?? *16* R–R2 wins a piece.

15 . . . B–N6
16 B–Q3



16 . . . P–K4

This move has been questioned, but certainly Black is at a loss for a good continuation. On *16* . . . B–K2 *17* Q–K3! O–O–O *18* N–B5! is disastrous.

17 B–K3 B–Q4
18 B–K4

Consistently playing for the attack. *18* Q–K2 was a good alternative.

18 . . . Q–N6
19 PxP PxP
20 QR–Q1 BxB
21 QxB Q–K3
22 R–Q2 N–B3
23 Q–B3 R–KN1
24 KR–Q1

Black is in a tight spot. He cannot castle; he can scarcely develop.

24 . . . R–N5

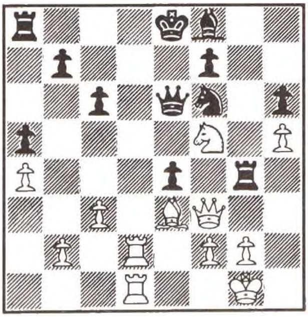
Allows a decisive combination, but while many have criticized this move nobody has suggested anything better.

25 N–B5!

What? Seems to lose a piece. . . .

25 . . . P–K5

Where does the Queen go?



26 B–N6!!!

She doesn't, is the answer. Instead of winning a piece Black loses the exchange. For if 26 . . . B–K2 27 QxR! followed by 28 N–N7ch.

26 . . .	**RxPch**
27 QxR	**QxN**
28 R–Q8ch	**RxR**
29 RxRch	**K–K2**
30 Q–N3!	

White must still play with precision against his wily opponent.

30 . . .	**N–Q2**
31 B–B7	**Q–Q4**
32 P–QB4!	

Forcing a decision. On 32 . . . Q–Q5 there follows 33 P–B5!

32 . . .	**Q–KN4**
33 QxQch	**PxQ**
34 R–R8	

From here on in it's simple.

34 . . .	**K–K3**
35 BxP	**P–KB4**
36 B–B3	**P–B5**
37 P–R5	**P–N5**
38 P–N4	**P–B6**
39 B–Q2	**K–B2**
40 R–R7	**P–N6**
41 RxP	**Resigns**

Arthur W. Dake

In the summer of 1930 a young sailor from Oregon appeared at the Manhattan Chess Club in New York. Usually such visitors from the "hinterlands" are greeted with disdain by snobbish New Yorkers, and Dake was no exception. How could a mere sailor from Oregon who had just learned the moves a year before be any match for the great nabobs of the metropolis? Dake took everyone by surprise. Within a few months he convinced everybody that he was right near the top, if not as good as Kashdan, then considered America's strongest player.

For several years Dake continued to impress the chess world with his natural genius for the game. At one time he held the championship of both the Marshall and the Manhattan chess clubs, at that time probably the two strongest chess clubs in the world. Then his play began to fall off somewhat. The newcomers, Fine and Reshevsky, came along and outclassed him. Unable to sustain himself as a professional chess master, Dake returned to his native Portland. Since 1936 he has rarely taken part in serious competition. Dake had a natural gift for the game which has rarely been equaled. In the following game we see him defeat the great Alekhine at the height of his powers.

DAKE **ALEKHINE**

Pasadena, 1932

Caro-Kann Defense

1 P-K4 P-QB3
2 P-Q4 P-Q4
3 PxP PxP
4 P-QB4

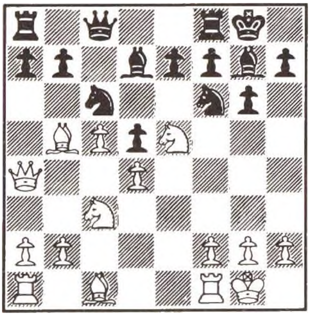
Before Botvinnik

A variation which Alekhine popularized.

4 . . . N-KB3
5 N-QB3 N-B3
6 N-B3 B-K3

A peculiar place for the Bishop, but Black wishes to force a clarification.

7 P-B5 P-KN3
8 B-QN5 B-N2
9 N-K5 Q-B1
10 Q-R4 B-Q2
11 O-O O-O



As a result of the opening White controls considerably more terrain than Black, but that is still a far cry from a win against an Alekhine.

12 B-KB4 P-QR3
13 BxN PxB

In such positions the two Bishops are a handicap.

14 KR-K1 N-R4
15 B-Q2

Threatening NxQP!.

15 . . . R-R2
16 R-K2 B-K1
17 QR-K1 P-B4!?

To secure a square for his Knight at K5. Typical of Alekhine—he prefers to try to get himself out of his difficulties by a sacrifice.

18 N-B3 N-B3

On . . . Q-Q1 19 N-KN5 is too hard to meet.

19 RxP RxR
20 RxR P-B5

Another desperate try.

21 BxP

Dake remains cool against his famous opponent; he rightly sees that there is really nothing to be feared.

21 . . . N-K5
22 B-K5 B-R3
23 NxN PxN
24 N-N5! Q-B4

On 24 . . . BxN 25 R-N7ch is decisive.

25	Q–N3ch	B–B2
26	NxB	RxN
27	RxR	QxR
28	Q–N8ch	Q–B1
29	P–Q5!!	

The quickest: after 29 QxQch? KxQ Black's King gets to Q4 and the ending is not so easy to win any more.

29	. . .	P–K6!
30	P–B4!	QxQ
31	BxQ	K–B2

Black must give up another pawn, for after 31 . . . PxP 32 P–B6 queens.

32	PxP	K–K1
33	P–QN4	P–N4
34	P–N3	PxP
35	PxP	K–Q1
36	P–QR4	K–B1
37	B–Q6	B–N2
38	K–B1	Resigns

To beat Alekhine was always a notable feat.

8.

The Age of Euwe

ALEKHINE had waned slightly by 1934. He was still the perennial first-prize winner, but his rivals were much less impressed by his play. The first to overthrow him was the Dutchman, Max Euwe.

In the two years that Euwe held the title, from 1935 to 1937, a whole generation of new masters suddenly sprang up. Chess supremacy continued moving away from Central Europe; during this period the Americans held the world chess leadership, later the Russians. At the historic Nottingham tournament of 1936 four world champions, Alekhine, Capablanca, Lasker, and Euwe, fought it out with four challengers, Botvinnik, Fine, Flohr, and Reshevsky; the next year a fifth, Keres, was added. Although Capa could still win first prize at Nottingham, it was not long before the newcomers definitely held the center of the stage.

Dr. Max Euwe

Euwe is the embodiment of logic in chess. Since chess is "theoretically" a mathematical exercise, one would expect every chess master to play according to the rules of logic. Nothing could be further from the truth. One man relies on imagination, a second on intuition, a third on authority. Only a rare genius like Euwe can consistently attempt to play logical chess.

Euwe was born near Amsterdam, Holland, in 1901. His chess career began early; at the age of ten he won a one-day tournament in Amsterdam, but his family preferred not to push him as a wonder child, and he finished his schooling quietly. In 1921, when he was 20, he won the Dutch championship and drew a match against Maroczy. Although he had already come pretty far, he preferred to devote himself to his academic work and played little chess until after he had received his doctorate in mathematics in 1926.

Paradoxically, Euwe's main international successes came in the form of defeats by narrow margins. In 1926 he lost a match to Alekhine by the score of 4½–5½ (two wins, three losses, five draws), a much better score than Capablanca made the next year in the world championship match

Euwe's progress was gradual. In 1932 he drew a match with Flohr and tied for second at Berne behind Alekhine. From that time on he was generally recognized with Flohr as Alekhine's most dangerous rival.

His chance came in 1935. Alekhine, playing somewhat too overconfidently, was defeated by a one-point margin, and Euwe was proclaimed world champion. In the two years that followed before the return match, Euwe's strength increased. Although he never enjoyed the supremacy over his rivals that his predecessors had, he had no superiors in this period. So u[illegible] a [illegible]

The Euwe-Alekhine matches were always full of surprises for the chess world. The games, moreover, were of a high fighting quality. In the 1935 encounter Euwe won when everybody expected him to lose. In 1937, when everybody thought he would win, he lost. The reason for this is that Euwe becomes too nervous under pressure. In the 1937 match he had a barber come in at times to give him a massage during the games, but even that did not suffice to reduce the tension.

After the war, Euwe took a five-year leave of absence from his school activities to devote himself entirely to chess. He traveled all over the world and played a great deal, but his tournament results were no longer on a par with his prewar standards. Then he left the academic world to become head of computer data processing in Holland. Upon his retirement he was chosen as president of the International Chess Federation.

Euwe's strength always lay in his theoretical grasp of the game. He is one of the greatest theoreticians of the age; his contributions to opening [illegible]) theory are voluminous. Once he builds up a superior position out of the opening, his handling of it can be perfection itself. But he too often lacks the stamina to pull himself out of bad positions.

The game which virtually clinched the title for Euwe in 1935 has come to be known as the "Pearl of Zandvoort."

EUWE	ALEKHINE

26th Match Game, 1935

Dutch Defense

1	P–Q4	P–K3
2	P–QB4	P–KB4

The two-edged Dutch was Alekhine's favorite during this period.

3	P–KN3	B–N5ch
4	B–Q2	B–K2

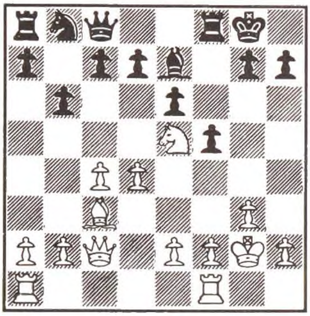
The maneuver which Alekhine popularized. The idea is that White's Bishop is poorly placed at Q2.

5	B–N2	N–KB3
6	N–QB3	O–O
7	N–B3	N–K5
8	O–O	P–QN3
9	Q–B2	B–N2
10	N–K5	NxN!

Similar to a sacrifice seen in the Euwe-Capablanca match. After

11 BxB? NxPch 12 K–R1 NxQP 13 Q–Q3 QN–B3, Black has more than enough for the exchange.

11 BxN BxB
12 KxB Q–B1



It does not seem as if White has been able to get any advantage from the opening, but Euwe comes through with a dynamic surprise.

13 P–Q5! P–Q3
14 N–Q3 P–K4
15 K–R1

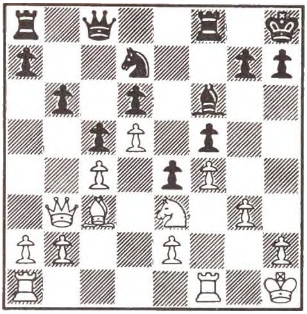
A far-sighted maneuver, the point of which soon becomes clear.

15 . . . P–B3
16 Q–N3 K–R1
17 P–B4 P–K5
18 N–N4 P–B4
19 N–B2 N–Q2
20 N–K3

Now it is clear what White had in mind: he plans to play P–KN4 and play for the attack.

20 . . . B–B3?

A mistake which gives White a great chance. Better was . . . N–B3.



21 NxP!!

This must have taken Alekhine by surprise.

21 . . . BxB
22 NxQP Q–N1
23 NxP B–B3
24 N–Q2

White has three pawns for his piece and good attacking chances.

24 . . . P–KN4!

Alekhine never defends passively. The threat of P–K4–K5 is met by a counterattack.

25 P–K4 PxP
26 PxP B–Q5
27 P–K5 Q–K1
28 P–K6 R–KN1

So that if 29 PxN? Q–K7.

29 N–B3?

Inaccurate. 29 Q–KR3! would have led to a forced win.

29 . . . Q–N3
30 R–KN1! BxR
31 RxB Q–B3??

The losing move. Subsequent analysis showed that 31 . . . Q–B4! was sufficient to draw, for if then 32 N–N5, P–KR3!.

32 N–N5!!

A Rook behind—and he makes combinations! The immediate threat is unpleasant.

32 . . . R–N2
33 PxN RxP
34 Q–K3 R–K2
35 N–K6

White has two pawns for the exchange and a strongly posted Knight; the rest is not difficult.

35 . . . R–KB1

Or . . . QxNP 36 P–Q6 R–Q2 37 N–N5!.

36 Q–K5 QxQ
37 PxQ R–B4

The two pawns decide in any event, but 37 . . . RxN 38 PxR R–B4 offered better chances.

38 R–K1

Even stronger was 38 R–N5!.

38 . . . P–KR3

Time pressure. 38 . . . RxN 39 PxR K–N2 makes life harder for White.

39 N–Q8! R–B7
40 P–K6 R–Q7
41 N–B6 R–K1
42 P–K7 P–N4

Desperation—nobody likes to resign.

43 N–Q8 K–N2
44 N–N7 K–B3
45 R–K6ch K–N4
46 N–Q6 RxKP
47 N–K4ch Resigns

For sheer logic the following game can scarcely be matched in the annals of chess.

KERES EUWE

Zandvoort, 1936

French Defense

1 P–K4 P–K3
2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 P–K5

Keres was then fond of this variation.

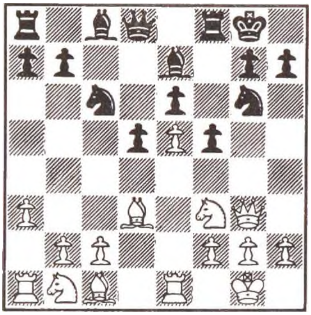
3 . . . P–QB4
4 N–KB3 PxP
5 QxP

Nimzovich preferred 5 B–Q3.

5 . . . N–QB3
6 Q–KB4 P–B4

At first sight this looks illogical because Black usually must keep . . . P–B3 in reserve to break up the White center. But Euwe has a different idea—he will leave White's pawn at K5 and prove that it is a source of weakness. The idea remainds one of something that Rubinstein once tried against Euwe.

7 B–Q3 KN–K2
8 O–O N–N3
9 Q–N3 B–K2
10 R–K1 O–O
11 P–QR3



The opening phase is over; now we are in for some midgame jockeying.

11 . . . N–N1!!

A profound regrouping idea; the Knight is headed for K5.

12 QN–Q2 P–QR4
13 N–N3 N–R3
14 P–QR4

To stop . . . P–R5. *14* BxN is preferable, but the attacker is always loath to part with his King's Bishop.

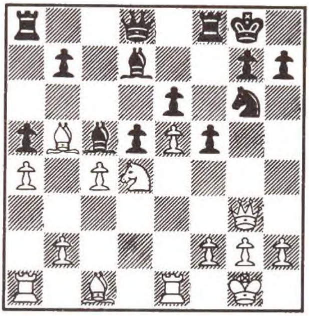
14 . . . N–N5
15 N(B3)–Q4 B–Q2
16 B–QN5 N–B3

White's Q-side has been weakened; therefore the Knight can return.

17 P–QB4?

Gives Black a chance. *17* P–QB3 was better.

17 . . . NxN
18 NxN B–B4!



Almost out of nowhere Black has built up a menacing K-side attack.

19 Q–Q3 BxB
20 NxB Q–R5!

Thoroughly consistent.

21 Q–B1

To avoid a weakening. If *21* P–KN3, Q–R6 threatens . . . P–B5–B6.

21 . . . QR–Q1!
22 B–K3 P–Q5!
23 B–Q2 P–Q6

First fruits of the attacking threats: a strong passed pawn.

24 P–QN3

The Bishop is artificially pinned. If *24* BxP P–Q7 *25* KR–Q1 NxP *26* RxP N–N5! wins.

24 . . . P–B5
25 R–K4 R–B4
26 QR–K1 R–R4

The attack continues to rage.

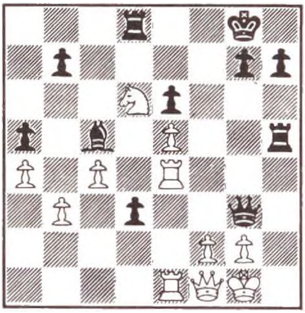
27 P–R3 R–N4
28 N–Q6

On 28 K–R1, BxP is decisive; e.g., *29* R–Q1 Q–N6 *30* BxRP P–B6!.

28 . . . QxP
29 BxBP NxB
30 RxN Q–N6!

Finis.

31 R(B4)–K4 R–R4
Resigns



It's mate!

Euwe's phenomenal knowledge of the openings led to mathematically precise victories. Here is a beautiful one against Alekhine.

EUWE ALEKHINE

5th Match Game, 1937

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 P–Q4 P–Q4
2 P–QB4 PxP
3 N–KB3 P–QR3
4 P–K3 N–KB3
5 BxP P–K3
6 O–O P–B4
7 Q–K2 N–B3

In this much analyzed position, Euwe springs a surprise move.

8 N–B3!

A considerable improvement over the older 8 R–Q1 P–QN4 9 B–N3 P–B5 *10* B–B2 N–QN5.

8 . . . P–QN4

On *8* . . . PxP here or later on the reply is R–Q1.

9 B–N3

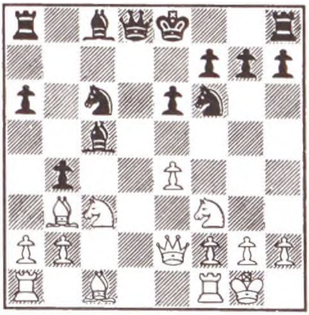
White's eighth move has allowed him to preserve this Bishop.

9 . . . B–K2
10 PxP BxP
11 P–K4!

Black is virtually lost after only 11 moves. If *11* . . . O–O *12* P–K5 N–Q2 *13* N–K4 B–K2 *14* R–Q1 and Black's position is untenable.

11 . . . P–N5

Allowing dazzling fireworks.



12 P–K5! PxN
13 PxN NPxP

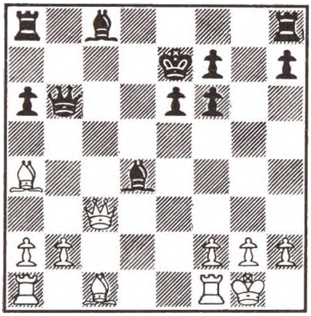
Not *13* . . . QxP *14* Q–B4 Q–K2 *15* B–K3!, winning a piece.

14 Q–B4 Q–N3
15 QxBP N–Q5

Other moves are no better.

16 NxN BxN
17 B–R4ch K–K2

Or *17* . . . B–Q2 *18* BxBch KxB *19* R–Q1.



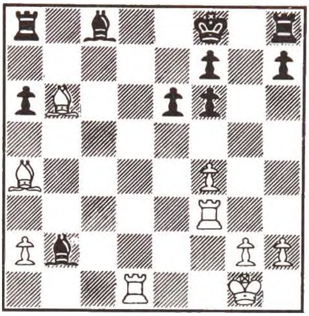
18 B–K3! BxQ?

The best chance was *18* . . . R–Q1, though White still maintains the pressure after *19* BxB! RxB *20* QR–Q1.

19 BxQ B–K4
20 QR–Q1! K–B1

The threat was B–B5ch.

21 P–B4! BxNP
22 R–B3!



A curious position. The immediate threat is R–QN3 winning the Bishop, and against this Black has no defense; for if 22 . . . P–B4 23 R–QN3 B–B3 24 B–B5ch K–N2 25 B–B6! winning the Rook.

22 . . . B–N2

Despair.

23 R–QN3 B–R6
24 RxB

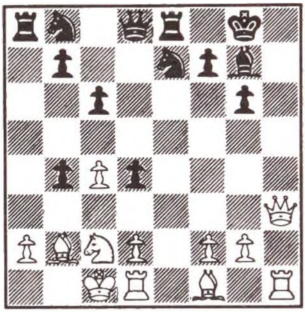
The rest is simple.

24 . . . R–KN1
25 R–KN3 RxR
26 PxR B–Q4
27 B–N3 BxB
28 PxB K–K1
29 P–QN4 R–QN1
30 B–B5 R–B1
31 R–R1 R–B3
32 K–B2 P–B4
33 K–K3 P–B3
34 K–Q4 K–B2
35 K–B4 K–N3
36 R–Q1 K–R4
37 R–Q6 RxR

38 BxR K–N5
39 B–K7 KxP
40 BxP KxBP
41 K–B5 Resigns

Here are some more products of Euwe's artistry.

Loman

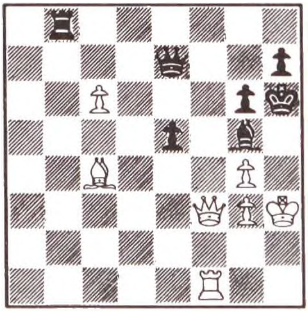


Euwe—TO PLAY

Rotterdam, 1923

1 NxQP BxN
2 Q–R8ch BxQ
3 RxB mate

Alekhine



Euwe—TO PLAY

2nd Match Game, 1935

1 Q–R1! R–N7
2 R–B7 Q–K1

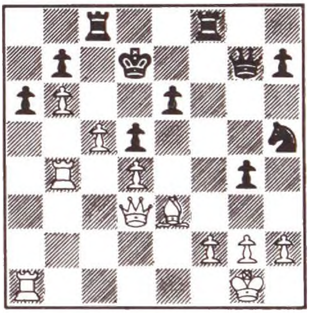
This loses at once. The main variation was 2 . . . Q–B4 3 Q–Q5! (threatening RxPch) QxQ 4 BxQ B–K6! 5 P–B7 B–N8 6 B–N2! R–QB7 7 K–R4! P–N4ch 8 K–R3 followed by R–B6ch and wins. (Euwe)

3 P–B7 R–QB7

Either 4 Q–Q5 or Q–B6 could not have been parried.

4 Q–N7! Resigns

Weenink



Euwe—TO PLAY

Amsterdam, 1923

1 RxP! PxR
2 P–N7 R–QN1
3 QxQRP Q–K2
4 B–N5! QxB
5 Q–Q6ch K–K1
6 QxQRch K–B2
7 QxRch KxQ
8 P–N8=Qch Resigns

Samuel Reshevsky

Reshevsky has had two chess careers: one as a child prodigy, the other as a grandmaster.

Born in a small Polish town in 1911, Sammy learned the moves when he was three or four, and at five he was already so strong that he was giving simultaneous exhibitions. During the war his town was occupied by the Germans, and the German general in charge of the province called Sammy to his headquarters and commanded him to play some chess. Sammy of course won and told the general, "You play war, I play chess." Oh for the privileges of childhood!

After the war the child prodigy was taken on a grand tour. There have been a few other child prodigies in the history of the game—Capablanca, Morphy, Pomar, Fischer—but none could compare with Reshevsky. Added to his phenomenal ability at chess was the uninhibited personality of a child who has the feeling that he can get away with anything. This combination made Sammy tremendously popular; wherever he went the houses were sold out. Many people who came to see him thought it was some kind of hoax, but all came away convinced. His strength at the age of eight or nine was that of a master, though not what (2200) it was later. In 1919 he played a serious game with grandmaster Vidmar in Vienna and lost (he took his revenge seventeen years later at Nottingham), but it was clear that he was good enough to play in master tournaments.

Just what made him so strong puzzled everybody. Psychologists in Switzerland put him through a number of tests but could find little; evidently his chess gift was specific and unique.

Sammy soon received an invitation to visit the United States, and he toured this country for several years. Charlie Chaplin offered him a movie job, but his advisers turned it down for religious reasons. In 1923 he played in a small masters' tournament in New York; while he did not do too well he showed that he had to be taken seriously.

At that time the philanthropist Julius Rosenwald took an interest in him and financed his education until he became of age, on condition that Sammy stay away from chess. He became an accountant by profession, but later abandoned it to devote all his time to his first love. ?

In 1931 Reshevsky returned to the chess world; he played in a Western Championship Tournament at Tulsa and captured first prize. For a few years after that his results were good but not outstanding. Then, in 1934 he won first prize at Syracuse ahead of all the leading American players. Rivalry with Fine then dominated American chess until the latter's retirement in 1951. After 1956 he was gradually nosed out by

Fischer, though he drew with him in 1961. At 63, Sammy was still active in the tournament arena, longer than any other master except Lasker.

In 1935 Reshevsky returned to the international arena in a tournament at Margate, England. Here he astonished everybody by beating Capablanca and finishing first. The next year he won the first U.S. Championship title and tied for third at Nottingham, thus placing himself definitely among the elite who were considered serious challengers for the world championship.

In the ensuing years Reshevsky almost invariably won a high prize in every contest in which he took part. However, his results in the United States have been better than his results abroad. He won the U.S. Championship seven times (tied once). But in the world championship tournament in 1948 he was somewhat of a disappointment.

Reshevsky's style is a curious one. Time and again he gets into lost or impossible positions—yet he wins. How does he do it?

Twenty-five years ago, when Sammy was touring the world as a boy wonder, another prodigy, who was then getting his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago at fifteen, was asked to explain Reshevsky's success. "Sammy has a secret move," he replied, "and whenever he gets into a tight spot he plays it."

Many people who watch Reshevsky today are often inclined to think that explanations involving secret moves have a great deal of truth to them. Time and again he gets into a poor or mediocre or even lost position, with fifteen or twenty moves to make in two minutes. Bang-bang-bang is all the spectators hear; and when the smoke has cleared—Sammy has won. How does he do it?

Sammy's success is primarily due to a will to win which is far stubborner than that of any other grandmaster. Others get tired, or excited, or rattled, or lose interest, or lose hope; Reshevsky never.

But, the reader may well object, surely that is not enough. Lots of lesser mortals want to win just as fiercely, and it does them no good. True enough, the will to win is only one aspect in which he differs from other masters.

There is more. Technically, Reshevsky is characterized above all by superb tactical skill. Unlike Euwe and Fine he does not bother much about the openings. Unlike Botvinnik he is little concerned with the strategical backbone of the game. What he cares about are tactical combinations, and these he handles to perfection. That is why he does well in time-pressure: with both players moving fast there is no opportunity for deep strategy—all that counts is tactics. And Reshevsky generally manages to see a little farther than the other fellow.

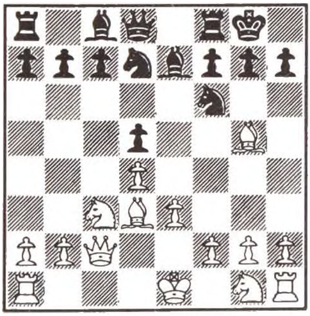
At his best, Reshevsky was notable for his mastery of the subtleties of position play. His style has often been likened to Capablanca's. Here is his celebrated win against the Cuban, which showed the chess world that the former child prodigy was now an adult prodigy.

RESHEVSKY CAPABLANCA
Margate, 1935
Queen's Gambit Declined

1	P–Q4	N–KB3
2	P–QB4	P–K3
3	N–QB3	P–Q4
4	B–N5	QN–Q2
5	PxP	

One of Reshevsky's favorite variations. Against Capa it has a psychological value since he lost an important game with it to Alekhine in their match.

5	. . .	PxP
6	P–K3	B–K2
7	B–Q3	O–O
8	Q–B2	



Keeping the development of his KN in reserve. Alekhine's idea, 8 KN–K2 and castling Q-side, is excellent.

8 . . . P–B4

A weakening move, perhaps played to avoid the Alekhine variation. 8 . . . P–B3 is preferable.

9	N–B3	P–B5
10	B–B5	R–K1
11	O–O	P–KN3
12	B–R3	N–B1

Better was 12 . . . P–QR3. Reshevsky now evolves an interesting combination.

13	BxB	RxB
14	BxN	BxB

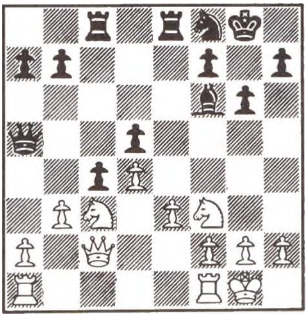
It looks as though Black has overcome the opening difficulties; he is in for a surprise.

15 P–QN3!

A subtle and profound idea. If in reply 15 . . . PxP? 16 QxP wins the QP.

15 . . . Q–R4?

The fatal mistake, though Black could hardly have known it. 15 . . . Q–Q2 was essential.



16 P–QN4!

A beautiful move which artificially isolates the QP and builds up a variety of threats.

16 . . . **Q–Q1**

Forced; if *16* . . . QxNP *17* QR–N1 Q–Q3 *18* RxP is crushing.

17 **Q–R4!** **P–QR3**
18 **P–N5!**

Now Black's pawns are attacked in many ways.

18 . . . **R–K3**
19 **QR–N1**

Threatening to win a pawn by PxP and Q–N5. The move also prevents the blockade of the Q-side with . . . P–QR4, for then 20 P–N6! wins a pawn; e.g., 20 . . . RxP *21* RxR QxR 22 NxP Q–Q3 23 QxRP.

19 . . . **R–N1**
20 **R–N2** **B–K2**

Hoping to prepare . . . P–QR4.

21 **PxP**

Keeps the Q-side open.

21 . . . **RxP**
22 **Q–B2** **N–K3**
23 **KR–N1** **R–R2**
24 **P–QR4** **N–B2**
25 **N–K5**

Threatening N–B6. Black has managed to defend against all the threats thus far, but his pieces are awkwardly placed and his position uncomfortable.

25 . . . **Q–K1**
26 **P–B4**

Planning P–B5 by opportunity.

26 . . . **P–B3**
27 **N–N4** **Q–Q2**
28 **P–R3** **K–N2**
29 **N–B2** **B–R6**
30 **R–R2** **B–Q3**
31 **N(B2)–Q1**

Maneuvering to find an opening. One possibility is N–N5, and then if . . . NxN, RxN and N–B3; another is P–B5.

31 . . . **P–B4**

Better was *31* . . . R–R3 to reply to N–N5 with . . . N–K1.

32 **N–N5** **R–R4**
33 **NxN** **BxN**
34 **N–B3!**

The grand tour of the N from KB3 to K5 to KN4 to KB2 to Q1 to QB3 is striking. Now the threat is R(R2)–N2 and R–N5.

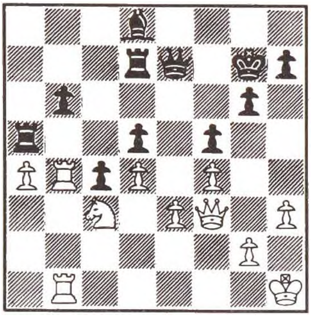
34 . . . **Q–K3**
35 **Q–B2** **P–N3**
36 **Q–B3** **R–Q1**
37 **R(R2)–N2**

Now it looks as though the QP cannot be defended, but Capa finds something.

37 . . . **Q–K2!**

So that if 38 R–N5 RxR 39 RxR Q–R6!; e.g., *40* NxP P–B6! and Black wins!

38 **R–N4** **R–Q2**
39 **K–R1** **B–Q1**



R–N5 is still not feasible; what is White to do?

40 P–N4!

With so many of Black's pieces tied to the defense of the QP, he prepares a K-side attack.

40 . . . PxP
41 PxP Q–Q3
42 K–N1 B–B2
43 K–B2!

Another remarkable theme: the White King is headed for QB2.

43 . . . R–B2!

And again Capa finds an ingenious defense. If now 44 K–K2 P–N4 gives Black a dangerous counterattack.

44 P–N5! B–Q1
45 K–K2 BxP?

The only inaccuracy in an otherwise perfect defense. After 45 . . . Q–K3, threatening Q–B4, White's task would have been much harder.

46 RxP Q–R6
47 K–Q2!

A comparison of this with the previous diagram shows the profundity of White's winning scheme. By defending the N with his King, White is free to attack.

47 . . . B–K2
48 R–N7 RxRP

Desperation. If 48 . . . Q–Q3 49 R(N7)–N5 RxR 50 PxR! R–B4 51 P–N6 and wins.

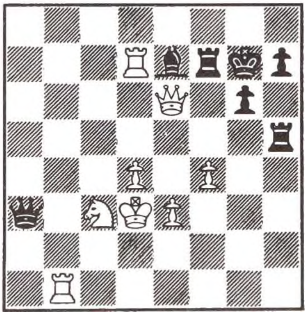
49 QxP

Of course not 49 NxR?? Q–Q6ch and Black wins!

49 . . . R–R4
50 QxP

Finis. Reshevsky's strategy has torn apart Black's position. The remainder is easy.

50 . . . R–R4
51 K–Q3 Q–R1
52 Q–K6 Q–R6
53 R–Q7



53 . . . R(R4)–KB4
54 R–N3!

Wins a piece.

54 . . . Q–R8
55 RxB Q–B8ch

One last spite check.

56 K–Q2 Resigns

Reshevsky is one of the greatest masters of the defense in the history of the game. Here is an outstanding effort.

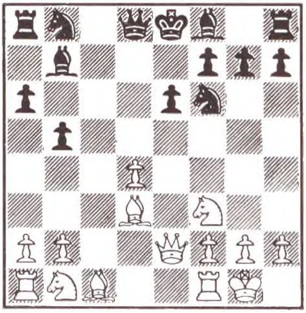
LANDAU RESHEVSKY

Kemeri, 1937
Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 P–Q4 P–Q4
2 P–QB4 PxP
3 N–KB3 N–KB3
4 P–K3 P–QR3
5 BxP P–K3
6 O–O P–B4
7 Q–K2 P–QN4
8 B–Q3

Better *8* B–N3.

8 . . . PxP
9 PxP B–N2



Landau was an attacker par excellence, and Reshevsky of course knew what he was letting himself in for.

10 P–QR4! P–N5
11 QN–Q2 B–K2
12 N–B4 P–QR4

To stop P–R5.

13 B–B4 O–O
14 KR–Q1 N–B3
15 B–K5!

An ingenious idea. Landau now manages to conjure up many threats.

15 . . . N–Q4
16 Q–K4 P–N3
17 Q–N4

The battle is taking on a more difficult shape. White is preparing to make inroads on the K-side, and Black must tread carefully.

17 . . . N–B3
18 Q–B4 N–R4!?

To shift this N from Q4 to KR4, let the White Queen penetrate to KR6 . . . what's up? We shall soon see.

19 Q–K3!

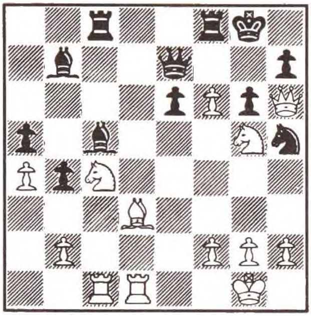
Avoiding the trap. If *19* Q–R6 NxB! *20* PxN BxN *21* BxP BPxB! *22* RxQ QRxR *23* PxB N–B5! wins.

19 . . . R–B1
20 QR–B1 NxB
21 PxN B–B4!
22 Q–R6 Q–K2!
23 N–N5?

White finally falls for a trap. *23* NxP? is refuted by . . . BxN, but *23* B–K2! was excellent.

23 . . . P–B3
24 PxP

Expecting the routine . . . NxP.



24 . . . BxPch!!

A bolt from the Black.

25 KxB

White suddenly discovers that he is lost. If 25 K–R1 RxP 26 NxQRP RxR 27 RxR B–K6 and wins.

25 . . . QxPch
26 N–B3

Or 26 K–N1 Q–B7ch and mates.

26 . . . BxN
27 PxB QxPch
28 K–N1 R–B5!

Nothing can be done against . . . R–N5ch.

29 QxR

Resigning is no better.

29 . . . NxQ
30 B–B1 R–B4

More "brilliant" but a little less effective was 30 . . . RxN.

31 R–Q8ch

Spite check.

31 . . . K–N2
32 R–Q7ch K–R3
Resigns

A typical Reshevsky game.

Reshevsky can also produce brilliancies a la Morphy with the best of them. Here is one of his snappiest.

RESHEVSKY VASCONCELLOS

Boston, 1944

French Defense

1 P–K4

Sammy rarely opens with the KP, but here he already had first prize clinched and had nothing to lose.

1 . . . P–K3
2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 P–K5

Reshevsky obviously has a prepared variation.

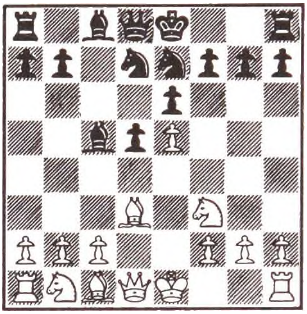
3 . . . P–QB4
4 PxP N–Q2
5 N–KB3 BxP?

Inconsistent. 5 . . . N–K2 is best.

6 B–Q3

Now simple development gives White an overwhelming game.

6 . . . N–K2



7 O–O N–QB3
8 B–KB4 Q–B2

More loss of time. *8* . . . B–N3–B2 was a preferable idea.

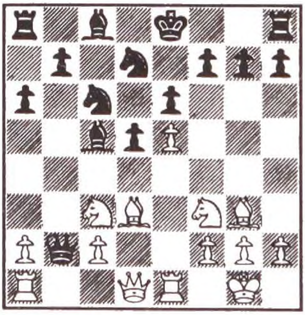
9 N–B3!

Ingeniously defending the KP: if *9* . . . NxKP? *10* NxN NxN *11* Q–R5! B–Q3 *12* N–N5, winning a piece.

9 . . . P–QR3
***10* R–K1 Q–N3**

In despair he goes pawn hunting.

***11* B–N3 QxP**



***12* NxP! PxN**
***13* R–N1 Q–R6**
***14* P–K6 N–B3?**

Vasconcellos is in one of those positions where almost anything looks better than what he does but is not really. However, here *14* . . . PxP *15* RxPch N–K2 was a stronger defense.

***15* PxPch KxP**
***16* B–R4 N–QN5?**

Another mistake which seals his doom with trumpets. *16* . . . B–K2 was absolutely necessary.

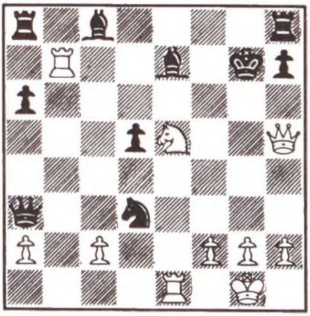
***17* N–K5ch K–B1**
***18* BxN NxB**

Or *18* . . . PxB *19* Q–R5!!! PxN *20* RxP with numerous mating threats.

***19* BxPch!! KxB**
***20* RxPch!!!**

This is the hidden point. On *19* . . . BxR *20* Q–N4ch leads to a quick mate: *21* . . . K–B3 *22* Q–B3ch K–N2 *23* Q–B7ch K–R3 *24* Q–B6ch K–R4 *25* P–N4 mate.

***20* . . . B–K2**
***21* Q–R5!**



Every White piece except the Queen is *en prise*—and still he wins. Mind over matter!

21 . . . R–B1

There are many ways to lose. The prettiest is 21 . . . BxR 22 Q–B7ch K–R3 23 N–N4ch K–N4 24 Q–N7ch K–R4 25 Q–R6ch! KxN 26 P–R3ch K–B4 27 P–N4 mate.

22 Q–N5ch K–R1

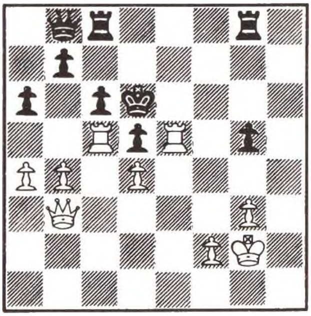
Now every White piece is *en prise*.

23 N–N6ch! PxN
24 Q–R6ch K–N1
25 QxPch K–R1
26 R(N7)xB Resigns

It is mate. Even the loser must have enjoyed this game.

Here are some more samples of Sammy's skill.

Santasiere

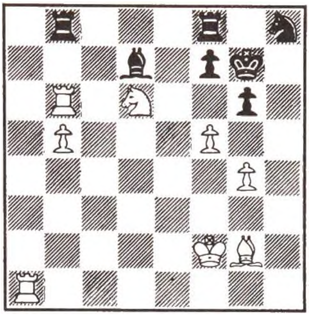


Reshevsky—TO PLAY

U.S. Championship, 1938

1 R(B5)xQPch! PxR
2 QxPch K–B2
3 Q–B5ch K–Q2
4 Q–K7ch K–B3
5 Q–K6ch Resigns

Treysman



Reshevsky—TO PLAY

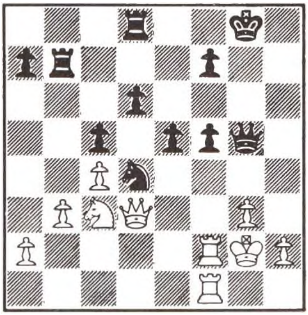
U.S. Championship, 1938

1 P–B6ch! K–R3

On . . . KxP 2 N–K8 dbl ch wins the exchange.

2 K–N3! K–R2
3 RxR RxR
4 P–N5 R–N3
5 R–R6 R–N1
6 B–B6 B–B4
7 R–R8 RxR
8 BxR B–Q6
9 P–N6 B–R3
10 B–N7! Resigns

Fine



Reshevsky—TO PLAY

Western Championship
Detroit, 1933

1 RxP! NxR
2 RxN Q–R3?

Best was . . . Q–N2 3 N–Q5 K–B1 4 Q–K4 P–B3!.

3 Q–K4 R–K2
4 Q–N4ch K–B1
5 R–R5 Q–N2
6 Q–R4 K–K1
7 N–Q5 P–B4
8 NxR Resigns

André Lilienthal

The Hungarian master André Lilienthal was one of the tournament regulars in the 1930s. His style at its best was on the highly imaginative side, though he was somewhat lacking in originality. In 1935 he settled in Russia and became a Soviet citizen. Here is his most celebrated victory.

LILIENTHAL CAPABLANCA

Hastings, 1934–35
Nimzo-Indian Defense

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 N–QB3 B–N5
4 P–QR3

The Samisch variation, in vogue at that time and Lilienthal's favorite.

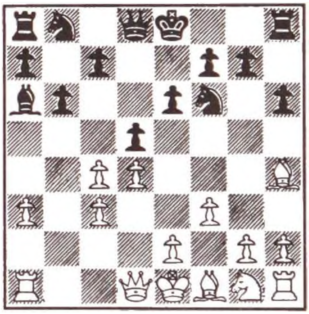
4 . . . BxNch
5 PxB P–QN3

Generally 5 . . . P–B4 or 5 . . . P–Q4 is preferred.

6 P–B3 P–Q4

Thus his fifth move was a loss of time.

7 B–N5 P–KR3
8 B–R4 B–R3



9 P–K4!

An invitation to complications. If in reply 9 . . . P–KN4 10 B–N3 PxKP 11 B–K5 QN–Q2 12 Q–R4! B–N2 13 P–B5! with a strong attack.

9 . . . BxP

Capa, perhaps fearing a prepared variation, decides to play it safe.

10 BxB PxB
11 Q–R4ch Q–Q2

12 QxBP Q–B3
13 Q–Q3 QN–Q2
14 N–K2 R–Q1
15 O–O P–QR4

To stop Q–R6.

16 Q–B2

To play P–QB4, which cannot be done at once because of . . . N–K4.

16 . . . Q–B5
17 P–B4

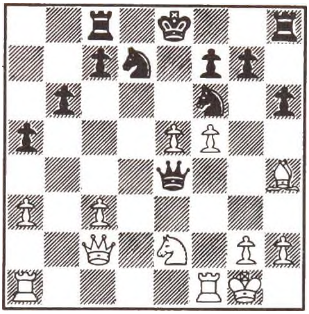
If 17 P–K5 N–Q4. The text keeps the initiative.

17 . . . R–QB1
18 P–B5!

The introduction to a beautiful combination.

18 . . . P–K4
19 PxP! QxKP

Thinking "now I'm out of it." . . .



20 PxN!!

Only to find himself really in it!

20 . . . QxQ
21 PxP R–KN1
22 N–Q4 Q–K5

Or 22 . . . Q–R5 23 QR–K1ch N–K4 24 RxNch K–Q2 25 R–Q5ch K–K1 26 R–K1 mate.

23 QR–K1 N–B4
24 RxQch NxR
25 R–K1 RxP
26 RxNch Resigns

C. H. O'D. Alexander

Although England was the leading chess country in the first half of the nineteenth century, in our times it has produced few top-notch masters. The man with the most talent, who could have gone much farther had he devoted more time to it, is C. H. O'D. Alexander. By profession Alexander is a mathematician. At one time he had the desire to become a professional chess master, but financial support was lacking.

Alexander's style is very enterprising. He avoids stereotyped variations and prefers to go his own way, which often produces chess of much freshness and originality. Here is one of his finest efforts, a truly great game.

ALEXANDER BOTVINNIK

Radio Match: England–U.S.S.R., 1946

French Defense

1 P–K4 P–K3
2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 N–QB3 B–N5
4 P–K5 P–QB4
5 P–QR3

The most aggressive line, well suited to Alexander's temperament.

5 . . . BxNch
6 PxB N–K2
7 Q–N4

All this is book—and Botvinnik's favorite variation.

7 . . . PxP

A move, says Botvinnik, which leads to a very intense struggle. This is quite in keeping with his style.

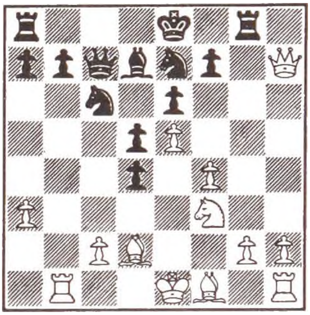
8 QxNP R–N1
9 QxP Q–R4

A new idea. The older *9* . . . Q–B2 is refuted by *10* N–K2!.

10 R–N1! QxPch
11 B–Q2 Q–B2

Inconsistent. Since he is playing to win pawns he might as well have tried *11* . . . QxRP.

12 P–KB4 QN–B3
13 N–B3 B–Q2



14 N–N5!

Botvinnik's innovation has failed; after only fourteen moves he has a lost position.

Black cannot castle because of the disintegrating effect of NxBP, and if *14* . . . R–KB1 *15* P–KR4 and the RP will march on to happy hunting grounds.

14 . . . RxN

The only chance; but it still requires play of a high order to refute it.

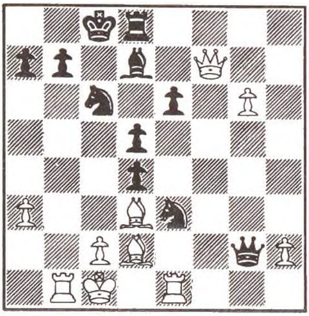
15 PxR O–O–O
16 QxP QxPch
17 K–Q1 N–B4
18 P–N6

Lo and behold—he has a choice of winning lines against a Botvinnik. *18* B–Q3 was also quite sufficient.

18 . . . N–K6ch

On *18* . . . QN–K2 *19* P–N7! wins.

19 K–B1 Q–K5
20 B–Q3 QxP(N7)
21 R–K1



21 . . . N–K4

Botvinnik cabled after the game: "Congratulations on victory. You made the best of my mistake on the 21st move."

What he thought he could do remained a mystery until it was cleared up in his notes. He maintained that 21 . . . N–B5 would have held the position. But subsequent analysis showed that White can still win, the main variation running 21 . . . N–B5 22 BxN PxB 23 Q–B6! QxRP 24 B–N5 Q–N6 25 K–N2! Q–B6ch 26 K–R2 QxBPch 27 R–N2 Q–B6 28 P–N7! QxR 29 QxRch! NxQ 30 P–N8=Q and wins.

22 Q–B4 N–B6
23 R–K2

Good enough, though 23 B–R5! was more forceful.

23 . . . Q–R6
24 BxN P–K4
25 Q–B7 PxB
26 P–N7 Q–N5
27 P–R3! Q–N8ch
28 K–N2 Q–N6
29 B–N6! N–Q5

The rest is easy.

30 P–N8=Q RxQ
31 QxRch K–B2
32 Q–R7!

Never a dull moment. On 32 . . . NxR 33 B–B5 is decisive.

32 . . . K–Q3
33 B–Q3 P–K5
34 Q–R6ch K–B2
35 RxP Q–K4
36 K–R2! N–B4
37 Q–N5 B–K3
38 B–K2 P–Q5 dis ch
39 R(3)–N3 P–N4
40 Q–Q2 P–Q6
41 B–N4 Resigns

Georges Koltanowski

The Belgian Georges Koltanowski occupies a unique position in the history of chess—he is a specialist in blindfold play. His over-the-board strength is not outstanding, that of a good master, but in blindfold exhibitions he has few peers. One of his favorite tricks is to have the name of a city entered on each of the sixty-four squares of a board before he begins an exhibition. When he finishes he does a Knight's tour blindfold from city to city! He knows the chessboard better than most men know their own homes.

Shortly before the war Kolty moved to this country, where he has since settled down and become an American citizen. His lively commentary and blindfold wizardry have made him popular wherever he goes.

KOLTANOWSKI WALPOLE

One of eight blindfold games
England, 1937

Queen's Pawn Opening

1	P–Q4	N–KB3
2	N–KB3	P–K3
3	P–K3	

Koltanowski has always been fond of his countryman Colle's system.

3	. . .	P–Q4
4	B–Q3	QN–Q2
5	QN–Q2	B–Q3
6	P–K4	PxP
7	NxP	NxN
8	BxN	N–B3
9	B–Q3	O–O
10	O–O	P–KR3

To stop the pin.

11	Q–K2	B–Q2

White has come out of the opening with greater mobility, but to convert it into a win blindfolded with seven other games going is quite a feat.

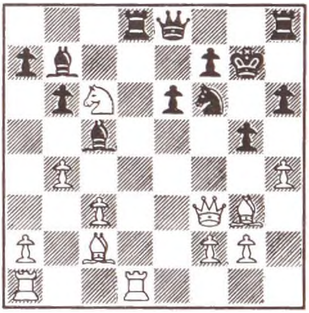
12	N–K5	P–B4
13	PxP!	BxP
14	R–Q1	Q–K2
15	B–KB4	QR–Q1
16	Q–B3	B–B1
17	P–B3	P–KN4

A frantic effort to get some air.

18	B–N3	K–N2
19	P–KR4	R–KR1
20	B–B2	P–N3
21	N–B6	B–N2
22	P–N4!	

So that if 22 . . . B–Q3 23 NxQ BxQ 24 RxB, winning a piece.

22	. . .	Q–K1



Allows a neat finish, but there was no real defense.

23	QxNch!!	KxQ
24	B–K5 mate	

William Winter

For a number of years Winter was one of England's outstanding representatives in international chess. His play, as in the following game, was notable for its combination of strategic accuracy and brilliance.

WINTER **MIKENAS**

Lodz, 1935
Dutch Defense

1 P–Q4 P–K3
2 N–KB3 P–KB4
3 P–KN3 N–KB3
4 B–N2 B–K2
5 O–O O–O
6 P–B4 P–Q3

Better is . . . P–Q4 immediately.

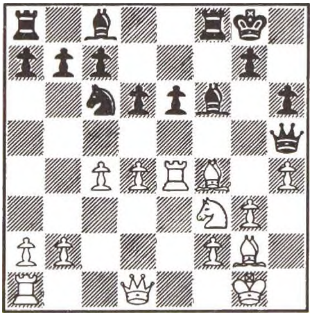
7 N–B3 Q–K1
8 R–K1

Q–B2 is also strong. The present game helped to refute Black's setup.

8 . . . Q–R4
9 P–K4 PxP
10 NxP NxN
11 RxN N–B3
12 B–B4!

Finely conceived. The point will soon be clear.

12 . . . B–B3
13 P–KR4 P–KR3



14 R–B1!

Now we see what White is driving at: P–B5 is a serious threat.

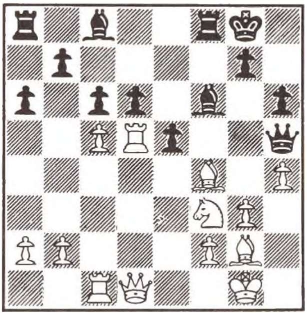
14 . . . P–R3
15 P–B5! NxP!

A combinative reply. On the stodgy *15* . . . P–Q4 *16* R–K2 R–B2 *17* Q–Q2 White's game is as good as won.

16 RxN!

An elegant rejoinder. The alternative *16* NxN? QxQch *17* RxQ P–K4 is much weaker.

16 . . . P–K4
17 R–Q5! P–B3



Apparently regaining the piece with a good game: after *18* Rx QP? PxB Black should win.

18 PxP!!

A brilliant reply.

18 . . . PxR
19 QxPch K–R1
20 NxP

White has a powerful attack and two pawns for the exchange; the rest is easy.

20 . . .	BxN
21 BxB	Q–B2
22 R–B7	B–Q2

22 . . . QxPch is good only for a spite check.

23 QxQ	RxQ
24 BxP	R–K1
25 P–B4	

White has too many pawns.

25 . . .	B–K3
26 BxP	BxP
27 P–QN4	B–K3
28 P–N5	R–Q2
29 P–N6	R–QN1
30 P–N7	K–N1
31 R–B8ch	R–Q1
32 P–Q7!	Resigns

A neat conclusion: if 32 . . . BxP 33 BxR.

9.

A Brief Interlude (1946-1948)

When the war ended in 1945, Alekhine was still technically champion. Nevertheless, there was little doubt that almost any of his younger rivals, Botvinnik, Keres, or Fine, could have defeated him. During the war the unsettled circumstances enabled him to sidestep a match. But what would happen now, with the return to normalcy?

Despite his extraordinary chess genius, Alekhine was not an especially admirable human being. During the war he had even stooped to write a series of anti-Semitic articles for the Nazis (he had chosen to stay on in Nazi Europe), arguing that only the "Aryan" spirit could save chess. When international chess resumed with the Hastings tournament at the end of 1945, he was boycotted by his fellow masters.

In this situation I proposed that the remaining six participants in the AVRO tournament of 1938 play a tournament to decide the title. While the others were agreeable, Botvinnik objected on the grounds that politics should not be allowed to interfere with chess (a noble principle, had it been followed). Instead Botvinnik, in a politically astute maneuver, challenged Alekhine to a match, which the champion hastily accepted. It was scheduled for London in the summer of 1946.

Shortly before the match was to take place, Alekhine suddenly died, thereby creating an unprecedented situation, since the title had passed from one champion to another uninterruptedly since Steinitz had defeated Anderssen in 1866. Again a natural solution suggested itself with a tournament composed of the surviving AVRO contingent. Unexpectedly Smyslov replaced Flohr, who by that time had become a Soviet citizen, and so he was no longer free to speak for himself. At the U.S.–U.S.S.R. match in Moscow in 1946, agreements were drawn up among all parties concerned; the tournament was to be played in Holland in the spring of 1947.

As might have been expected politics did enter the picture. A Dutch newspaper published the charge, later often repeated, that the Soviet players would throw their games to one another in order to allow a Soviet master to become world champion. (This danger was in fact so persistent that the FIDE later changed the rules to substitute matches for tournaments, so that the danger was avoided.) The Soviet government, knowing full well what the answer would be, then demanded that the Dutch government censor its newspapers. When the Dutch refused, the Soviets, in retaliation, withdrew from the tournament.

Legally there were various possibilities. Euwe might have reclaimed the title, as the last official champion before Alekhine. Or Keres and Fine could have been declared co-champions on the basis of their joint victory in the AVRO tournament. Or Euwe, Fine, and Reshevsky might have played a three-cornered tournament to decide the championship. Or the free world might have chosen a champion, and the communist world been left to choose its own; then the two could have met for the world championship.

Unfortunately for the Western masters the Soviet political organization was stronger than that of the West. The U.S. Chess Federation was a meaningless paper organization, generally antagonistic to the needs of its masters. The Dutch Chess Federation did not choose to act. The FIDE was impotent.

The result was a rescheduling of the tournament for the following year, with the vital difference that now half was to be played in Holland, half in the U.S.S.R. Dissatisfied with this arrangement and the general tenor of the event, I withdrew. (Incidentally, there was no real financial compensation offered to any of the Western players, who, unlike their Soviet counterparts, were totally unsubsidized.)

Five masters took part in the 1948 tournament. Botvinnik, playing in brilliant style, carried off first prize.*

Reuben Fine

Nothing offers a better perspective on the events of the past than the passage of time. My active chess career virtually ended with the publication of the first edition of this book, almost twenty-five years ago. It had lasted about twenty years, beginning with the New York State Championship at Rome in 1931, where I finished second in a strong field, though only sixteen. My last tournament was at New York in 1951, where I played listlessly, finishing fourth.

In all I played in some forty tournaments in this period, most of them international, against all the great players of that time, including the five world champions Lasker, Capablanca, Alekhine, Euwe, and Botvinnik. I finished first or tied for first in twenty-five of the forty tournaments, in one of the top three slots in thirty-three. In American tournaments there was an ongoing rivalry with Reshevsky, who finished ahead of me in the U.S. Championship, whereas I would beat him out in the open tournaments, which I won seven times, even though the opposition was frequently almost identical. In 1950, when the first official ranking of U.S. chess masters was issued, the over-all results placed me first ahead of Reshevsky.

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* However, his surprising loss to Keres in the last round, allowing the Soviet grandmaster to finish in a tie for third with Reshevsky, looked very suspicious.

In international tournaments after Nottingham, 1936, I was ranked among the eight leading masters of the world, who were called a "special class" or "extra class," since they were so far ahead of all the others active at that time. In the tournament among these eight masters, held in Holland in 1938, I tied for first with Keres. In the first half of this tournament I won 5½ points out of 6, a feat which has rarely been equaled in such competition. As indicated before, on the basis of this victory and in light of the circumstances of international chess in the war period, Keres and I should have been declared co-champions for the period 1946–1948, between the death of Alekhine and the 1948 tournament.

During the war I was involved in defense work, remaining in Washington.* At the Washington Chess Divan I experimented with various forms of blindfold chess, particularly blindfold at ten seconds per move, at which I developed considerable skill. My record of winning four simultaneous games blindfolded at ten seconds per move (at the conclusion of the U.S.–U.S.S.R. match in 1945) still stands, as does that of five clock games against strong players blindfold.**

My first chess book was written in 1934, in collaboration with Fred Reinfeld. It was the book of the Alekhine–Bogolyubov match of 1934. Sales of this book were dismal, offering seemingly little hope for chess books. However the book has recently been reissued by Dover Press and is still doing well. After a few more highly technical books I turned to the revision of the standard English-language book on the openings, *Modern Chess Openings*. Once my sixth edition was issued, it came to be known as the "Bible." Once I was even introduced at a simultaneous exhibition as "the author of the Bible (chess player's)."

MCO, Sixth Edition, was a great success, encouraging me to write more. There followed *Basic Chess Endings* (1941), *Chess the Easy Way* (1942), and *The Ideas Behind the Chess Openings* (1943). Later after the war *MCO* was revised and issued as *Practical Chess Openings* (1948).

Unexpectedly, after my retirement from active play, I acquired a new career as a chess author. Almost all of the twenty books I have written are study Botvinnik

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* Toward the end of the war I was retained by the Navy to work on a military problem which was in some respects similiar to chess. The field of operations research, then entirely novel, has since expanded enormously.

** In this variation the blindfold player's clock is stopped until he begins to think about the board in question, but he must still meet the time limit set.

still in print and selling well. In all more than half a million copies of all my books have been sold in ten different countries.

In 1948 I took my doctorate in psychology and have been a practicing psychologist and psychoanalyst ever since.

In master tournaments, prepared opening variations are a most feared weapon; sometimes days of analysis are required to find the right reply, and in the crowded two and one-half hours allotted the tournament player he can only too easily go wrong. Here is a game where I had the satisfaction of beating world champion Botvinnik with a prepared variation.

FINE BOTVINNIK

AVRO Tournament
Holland, 1938
French Defense

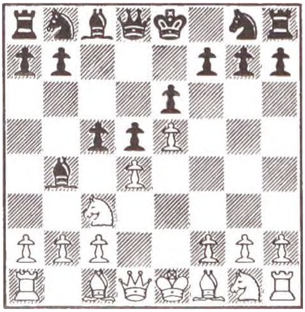
1 P–K4

Before this tournament I was known as a *1* P–Q4 player, hence my first move must have come as somewhat of a surprise to Botvinnik.

1 . . . P–K3

Botvinnik does not vary. Against *1* P–K4 he almost invariably played the French; sometimes he tried the Sicilian.

2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 N–QB3 B–N5
4 P–K5 P–QB4



5 PxP!?

This is the prepared move. Unlike Euwe, I make it a rule not to analyze such lines too profoundly before the game because it is most essential to be able to meet whatever surprises come up over the board and not everything can be foreseen.

5 . . . N–K2

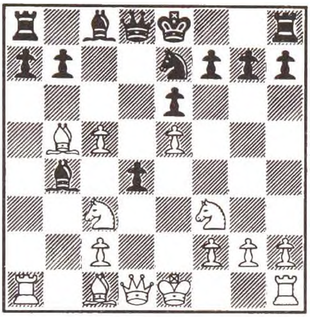
The advance 5 . . . P–Q5 6 P–QR3 is favorable for White.

6 N–B3 QN–B3
7 B–Q3 P–Q5

Accepting the complications. On 7 . . . BxP 8 O–O, White's game is freer.

8 P–QR3 B–R4
9 P–QN4 NxNP
10 PxN BxP
11 B–N5ch

Another possibility was O–O, but the text was part of the prepared variation.



11 . . . N–B3?

The fatal error. Necessary was *11* . . . B–Q2 *12* QxP BxNch *13* QxB BxB *14* N–Q4 with about equal chances.

12 BxNch PxB
13 R–R4! BxNch
14 B–Q2

Suddenly Black discovers that he is lost. The Bishop is hopelessly shut in, and it is only a question of time before White's superior development makes itself felt.

14 . . . P–B3

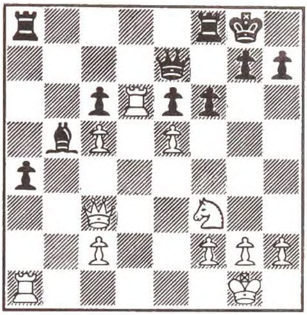
Desperately striving to free his Bishop.

15 O–O O–O
16 BxB PxB
17 Q–K1 P–QR4
18 QxP B–R3
19 KR–R1 B–N4

Hoping for *20* RxP, which would bring some freedom to the Black pieces.

20 R–Q4! Q–K2
21 R–Q6 P–R5

To tie White's Rook down.



22 Q–K3!

Threatening to win a pawn but not in an obvious way.

22 . . . R–R2
23 N–Q2!

The point: the poor Bishop will be driven away.

23 . . . P–R6

The pawn goes anyhow.

24 P–QB4 B–R5
25 PxP QxP
26 RxRP R–K1
27 P–R3

After this quiet move Black might as well resign.

27 . . . R(R2)–R1
28 N–B3 Q–N7
29 N–K5 Q–N8ch
30 K–R2 Q–B4
31 Q–N3! Resigns

There are too many threats on all sides. The most immediate one is R–Q7. If in reply *31* . . . R–K2 32 RxB! RxR 33 R–Q8ch.

And if *31* . . . R–R2 *32* R–B3 Q–K5 *33* N–Q7 K–R1 *34* R–B7 R–KN1 *35* N–K5 and so on.

In terms of over-all strategic planning and tactical execution, I consider the following to be the best game I have ever played.

FINE FLOHR

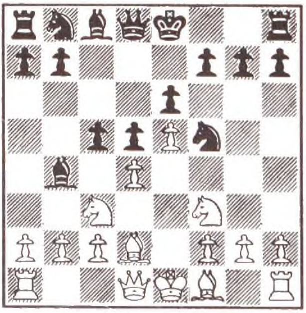
AVRO Tournament
Holland, 1938
French Defense

1 **P–K4** **P–K3**
2 **P–Q4** **P–Q4**
3 **N–QB3** **B–N5**
4 **P–K5** **P–QB4**
5 **B–Q2**

5 PxP, which I tried against Botvinnik (see the previous game), no longer had any surprise punch to it.

5 . . . **N–K2**
6 **N–B3** **N–B4?**

Meaningless. 6 . . . QN–B3 equalizes.



7 **PxP!** **BxP**
8 **B–Q3** **N–R5**

After his weak sixth move he must lose more time. On *8* . . . N–K2 9 O–O, he still cannot castle because of the routine sacrifice at KR7.

9 **O–O** **N–B3**
10 **R–K1** **P–KR3**

To castle. On *10* . . . O–O? at once, *11* BxPch wins.

11 **N–R4!** **B–B1**

Black is faced with a choice of evils. On *11* . . . B–K2 *12* NxN BxN *13* Q–N4 is powerful.

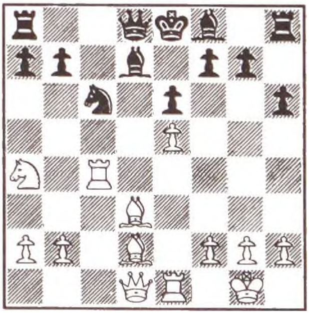
12 **R–QB1**

Preparing P–QB4, which would get this Rook into the game.

12 . . . **B–Q2**

Threatening to win a pawn by . . . NxNch followed by . . . NxKP.

13 **NxN!** **QxN**
14 **P–QB4!** **PxP**
15 **RxP** **Q–Q1**



White's development is plainly superior, but the problem of how to continue is still not easy to answer. In such positions it is necessary to find moves that keep the attack going.

16 Q–R5!!

Prevents *16* . . . P–QN4 because of *17* R–KB4 and prepares other threats.

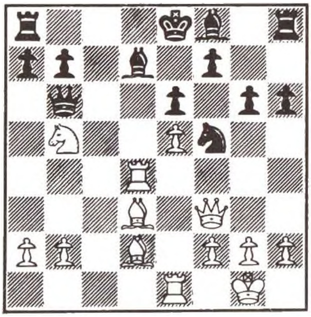
16 . . . N–K2

On the immediate *16* . . . P–KN3 *17* BxNP crashes through.

17 R–Q4 P–KN3
18 Q–B3 Q–B2
19 N–B3

This N must be remobilized.

19 . . . N–B4
20 N–N5! Q–N3



21 RxB!!

Decisive. Now Black's game falls apart.

21 . . . KxR
22 P–KN4 N–R5

If instead 22 . . . N–K2 23 QxBP and the position is hopeless. The best chance was 22 . . . Q–B3, although 23 R–K4 still wins.

23 QxBPch B–K2
24 B–N4 QR–K1

Threatening . . . R–KB1.

25 BxB RxB
26 Q–B6 P–R3

White can regain his material, but he has an even stronger variation in mind.

27 R–Q1! PxN
28 B–K4 dis ch Resigns

After 28 . . . K–B2 29 QxR(R8) R–Q2 30 R–B1ch, the Queen must be given up to stop mate.

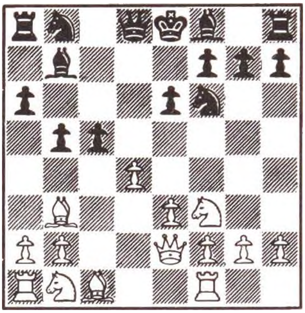
We are often asked how many moves we see ahead. Sometimes, as in the following game, we do not see ahead at all except for the crucial combinations. Our feel for the position tells us that something will happen and, as here, it does.

FINE STEINER

Hollywood, 1945

Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 P–Q4 P–Q4
2 P–QB4 PxP
3 N–KB3 N–KB3
4 P–K3 P–K3
5 BxP P–B4
6 O–O P–QR3
7 Q–K2 P–QN4
8 B–N3 B–N2



Black has advanced his Q-side pawns too quickly, and they must be broken up.

9 P–QR4 P–B5?

Surprisingly, the fatal mistake. 9 . . . P–N5 was essential.

10 B–B2 N–B3
11 PxP PxP
12 RxR QxR
13 N–B3 Q–R4

Forced, for if *13* . . . P–N5 *14* N–QN5 wins a pawn.

14 P–K4

The position where I did not bother to look ahead; I felt confident that something would turn up.

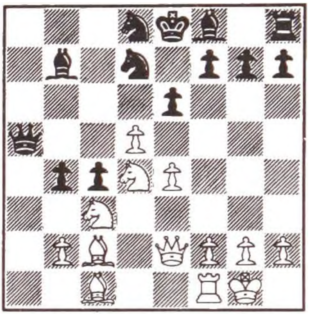
14 . . . N–Q2

If *14* . . . P–N5 *15* P–Q5 N–Q1 *16* B–R4ch wins.

15 P–Q5 N–Q1

Black is beginning to consolidate his position, and here I had to look ahead.

16 N–Q4! P–N5



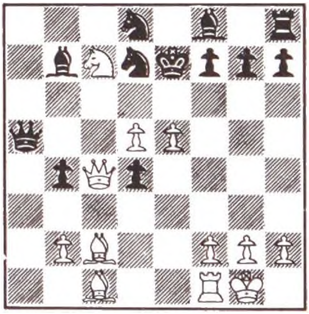
17 N(B3)–N5!

Offering a piece for the attack.

17 . . . P–K4

On the alternative *17* . . . P–N6 *18* PxP! wins; e.g., *18* . . . PxP *19* Q–R5ch! K–K2 (forced) *20* B–N1.

18 QxP PxN
19 N–B7ch K–K2
20 P–K5!



The immediate threat is mate.

20 . . . NxP

Forced.

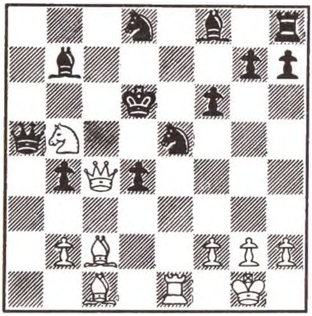
21	R–K1	P–B3
22	P–Q6ch!!	

The decisive move.

22	. . .	KxP

22 . . . K–Q2 23 B–B5ch is hopeless.

23 N–N5ch



When I originally annotated this game I wrote: "It is a pity that Steiner did not allow the continuation which is really the crux of the entire combinative series beginning with White's sixteenth move. It runs 23 . . . K–K2 24 RxNch! PxR 25 B–N5ch K–K1 26 N–B7ch K–Q2 27 B–B5ch K–Q3 28 N–K8 mate."

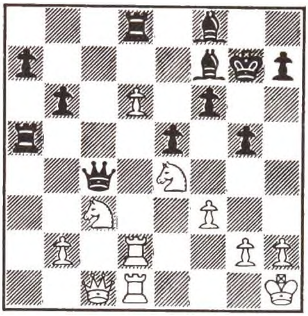
Returning now to the game.

23	. . .	QxN
24	QxQ	K–B2
25	Q–R5ch	Resigns

One of my most satisfying games.

Here are some more combinations from my collection.

Dake

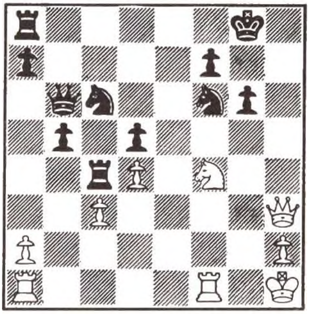


Fine—TO PLAY

Chicago, 1933

1	NxBP!!	KxN
2	N–K4ch	K–N2
3	R–QB2!	Q–R5
4	QxPch	B–N3
5	R–B7ch	K–N1
6	QxBch	Resigns

Grossman



Fine—TO PLAY

New York, 1933

1	NxNP!	K–N2
2	R–KN1!!	PxN
3	RxPch	KxR
4	Q–K6!	NxP?

4 . . . N–K4!! draws.

5 R–N1ch K–R3
6 Q–K3ch K–R2
7 Q–K7ch K–R3
8 Q–N7ch Resigns

Paul Keres

Keres stands out as one of the great combinative geniuses in chess history. Unlike Alekhine, who was his hero in the beginning, his combinations seem almost to come from nowhere rather than out of solid positional play. In fact, his style is in some respects closer to that of Anderssen than to that of anyone else. Almost alone among grandmasters after the First World War, Keres essays gambits in serious play and is responsible for many crucial innovations in them.

Paul Keres was born in 1916 in Narva, a small town in Estonia. He tells us in his autobiography that he learned chess at the age of four by looking on when his father played; the same was true of Capablanca. His chief rival then was his brother, three years older than himself, with whom he agreed on a set of rules which only approximated the actual ones. Chess literature was virtually nonexistent in the small town in which he lived. But such was his zeal for the game that he copied down every single game that came his way, eventually reaching a total of 800 games, each of which he had played over at least twice.

His first competition came in a ten-second chess tournament at Parnu in 1929. At first he was denied admittance because of his youth; but after breaking even with the champion of Parnu in two games, he was allowed to play and amazed everybody by scoring 100%. In 1930 he won first prize in a national students' tournament at Tallinn and was already recognized as one of the leading Estonian masters.

Since opportunities for play in Estonia were so limited, Keres turned to correspondence chess. The competition was quite keen, equivalent in fact to grandmaster strength; yet his results were outstanding. His play however was extraordinarily risky; he tried every conceivable gambit: one game was even opened with 1 P–KN4. Yet he won. By 1934 he was strong enough to win the Estonian championship, the first (and to date the last) Estonian grandmaster in the history of the game.

The following year, in 1935, the international team tournament at Warsaw gave him his first chance in international competition. At first board he was one of the sensations of the tournament, scoring 67% against the finest in the world. Several fantastically brilliant games focused the attention of the chess experts on him.

In 1936 he took part in a number of individual international tournaments. Here he gave evidence not only of great ability but also of great unsteadiness, which has remained characteristic of him ever since. At Bad Nauheim in 1936 he tied for first with Alekhine; shortly thereafter at Dresden, in a weaker field, he tied for eighth place in a ten-man tournament.

The earlier unsteadiness was ironed out in 1937, when he scored a brilliant series of victories, culminating in first prize at Semmering-Baden, ahead of Fine, Reshevsky, Flohr, and Capablanca. These victories elevated him to the class of the "elite" which then fought it out the next year at the AVRO tournament in Holland.

Whatever the technical purpose of the AVRO, it was in effect a tournament for the world championship, since by universal agreement the eight participants were head and shoulders above all the others of that day. Keres tied for first prize with Fine. Alekhine naturally avoided a match with Keres. As indicated before, Keres and Fine should have been declared co-champions for the interim period 1946–1948.

After the war Keres became a Soviet citizen by incorporation, when the Baltic countries were returned to the U.S.S.R. It was no secret that he was an avowed enemy of communism; in fact, it was widely reported that in the bloody purge of his countrymen by the Stalinist regime, Keres's life was saved only because of his chess prowess. When I met him again in person in Moscow in 1946, he visited me in my hotel room (which the other Soviet masters were afraid to do at that time) and castigated the regime mercilessly. It was no doubt because of his political feelings that the Soviet regime waited for years before they would let him travel out of the country, and even then only under the most stringent regulation of his movements.

After the war Keres remained among the best in the world but could never quite make the world championship. At times his old unsteadiness returned; thus shortly after the AVRO victory he finished twelfth in a field of eighteen at Leningrad-Moscow. Five times he finished second in the various Candidates' Tournaments to select the challenger, never first, thereby missing the official chance to play Botvinnik. Unofficially he should have been allowed to try in the light of his magnificent record, but political considerations took precedence over the interests of chess. It may be that his surprisingly bad results against Botvinnik were in part due to his anticommunist attitude, which made him exceptionally nervous in their individual games. ([illegible] ?)

Keres himself has given this description of his style:

> My style is generally considered one that tends towards combinative complications. This was unquestionably true of the period 1935–1937. When playing by correspondence, I sought to complicate positions as much as possible, even in the opening stage, as I feared that a positional struggle might become boring. I retained the same policy in my early tournaments, but after several disastrous experiences I

> had to change my views. I first adopted a more sensible style in the Semmering tournament, and with excellent results. In 1938 my chief problem was, therefore, to become familiar with this new style, which gives preference to the more solid and positional aspects of the game. My experiences have taught me that this is the style which is the proper one against opponents of equal strength. Hence I have become a devotee of the solid openings, and in the middle game I undertake risky attacks only when the chances favor me. My inclination is now toward the accumulation of slight advantages, although to translate these into victory is more arduous than to win—or lose!—by means of direct attack.

No one is a good objective judge of himself, and what Keres wrote was more wish than reality. His great forte remains in the area of the sudden unforeseen attack; when the accumulation of small advantages is involved, he often does quite poorly. But clearly a struggle is going on in his mind—to attack or not to attack—and this struggle must account for the unsteadiness he sometimes displays.

In personality Keres is again the opposite of what one would expect an attacking genius to be. He is modest and quiet to the point of being withdrawn. Once in the early years when a group of masters visited a night club to pick up some girls, he left early, saying he was planning to go to the zoo the next day. For a while he was a student of mathematics, but the war interrupted his plans. He remained a professional chess master, devoting all his energies to the game, until his untimely death in 1975.

In later years he began to do some writing and has enriched the chess literature considerably. His most important work is a book on the openings.

At the Warsaw Team Tournament in 1935 Keres was still a young unknown. Here is the game which catapulted him to world fame.

KERES WINTER

Warsaw Team Tournament,
1935
Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 N–KB3 N–KB3

The Nimzovich variation—a risky line against Keres. But how could Winter know who Keres was?

3 P–K5 N–Q4
4 N–B3 P–K3

Better *4* . . . NxN and . . . P–Q4.

5 NxN PxN
6 P–Q4 P–Q3

At first sight it looks as though White has nothing; one would expect the pawns to be exchanged and a drawish position to be reached. Keres, however, comes up with something.

7 B–KN5! Q–R4ch

The point is that after 7 . . . B–K2 8 BxB Black must play 8 . . . KxB, since 8 . . . QxB loses a pawn after 9 PxBP.

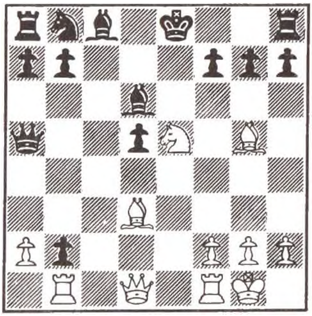
8 P–B3 PxQP

Apparently strong, for if 9 QxP N–B3 *10* Q–KB4 PxP *11* NxP Q–B2! with a good game.

9 B–Q3! PxBP
10 O–O! PxNP?

But this is too much. With *10* . . . N–B3 *11* R–K1 B–K3 Black still has an adequate defense.

11 R–N1 PxP
12 NxP B–Q3



After twelve moves the opening looks more like a King's Gambit than a Sicilian Defense! Black expects *13* R–K1 O–O *14* Q–R5 P–B4! with good defensive possibilities.

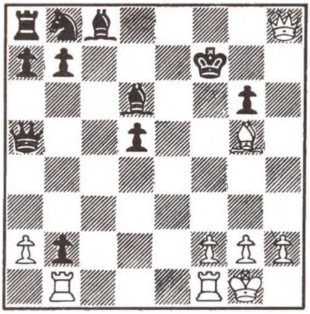
13 NxP!!

Tears Black's position apart.

13 . . . KxN
14 Q–R5ch P–N3

There is nothing better. If *14* . . . K–B1 *15* KR–K1 B–Q2 *16* R–K3 and R–B3ch.

15 BxPch PxB
16 QxR



Black's King is now too exposed. The rest is easy, though still pretty.

16 . . . B–KB4
17 KR–K1!

Threatening mate. RxP is also good.

17 . . . B–K5
18 RxB! PxR
19 Q–B6ch Resigns

Mate follows in a few moves; e.g., *19* . . . K–N1 *20* QxPch K–B1 *21* QxBch K–B2 *22* Q–B6ch and so on.

Even against first-class competition Keres essayed gambits at times. Here is one of his most successful efforts.

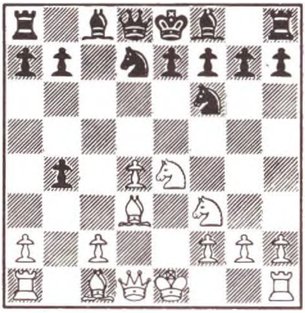
KERES ELISKASES

Semmering-Baden, 1937
Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 N–KB3 P–Q3
3 P–QN4!?

The Wing Gambit Deferred, introduced in this game.

3 . . . PxP
4 P–Q4 N–KB3
5 B–Q3 P–Q4
6 QN–Q2 PxP
7 NxP QN–Q2



8 N(K4)–N5!

A brilliant idea: if in reply 8 . . . P–KR3 9 N–K6! and Black's position is disrupted. And if 8 . . . P–K3 9 Q–K2, threatening NxBP.

8 . . . Q–B2

Prevents 9 N–K6 and prepares . . P–KR3.

9 P–B4!!!

The power of this move is fantastic. On 9 . . . PxP e.p. *10* Q–N3 wins, for if *10* . . . P–K3 *11* NxBP! KxN *12* N–N5ch with a mating attack.

9 . . . P–KR3
10 N–R3 P–KN4

Wins a tempo but leads to a further weakening of Black's pawns. *10* . . . P–K3 was more prudent.

11 N(R3)–N1 B–N2
12 N–K2

This N has made six of White's twelve moves; yet White's position is incredibly strong.

12 . . . P–K4

Eliskases prefers an active defense.

13 N–N3! O–O
14 O–O P–K5
15 NxKP NxN
16 BxN QxP

Black's defense is as subtle as White's attack is bold. As a result of the maneuver initiated with his fourteenth move Black has forced some exchanges, always favorable for the defender, and liberated himself somewhat —but not enough!

17 B–Q3 Q–Q4
18 R–K1 P–N5

Playable, though *18* . . . N–N3 was simpler.

19 N–R4 N–N3?

Eliskases decides belatedly to forego the pawn but without good reason. If *19* . . . BxP?? *20*

N–B5! wins a piece. But *19* . . . QxP was feasible, for if then *20* N–B5? QxR *21* QxP K–R1! and should win, while if in reply to *19* . . . QxP *20* R–N1 N–B4 forces another favorable exchange.

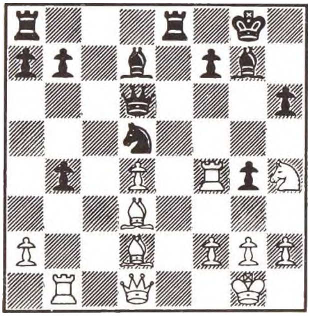
20 R–N1 B–Q2
21 R–K4 KR–K1
22 R–B4

A typical Keres position—the pieces are scattered all over, but the attack continues!

22 . . . Q–Q3

To play . . . N–Q4.

23 B–Q2 N–Q4



Black must have been expecting *24* R–K4 RxR *25* BxR R–K1 with a good game.

24 RxNP!

With this sacrifice White gets an overwhelming attack against the King.

24 . . . BxR
25 QxB

The immediate threat is now QxBch and N–B5ch, winning a piece.

25 . . . Q–KB3
26 N–B5 K–B1
27 NxB! QxN
28 Q–R5 N–B3

Forced, to stop BxRP.

29 Q–R4 P–KR4
30 RxP QR–B1
31 P–KR3 R–B2
32 R–N5!

This powerful move decides.

32 . . . R–K3
33 RxRP! Resigns

For if *33* . . . NxR *34* Q–Q8ch wins.

The following game, in which Keres stopped my winning streak, turned out to be one of the decisive contests of the tournament. It shows Keres at his most ingenious in a series of complicated positions.

FINE KERES

AVRO, Holland, 1938

Ruy Lopez

1 P–K4

Although in previous expert play I had generally preferred *1* P–Q4, in this tournament I had specially prepared a number of opening innovations in the KP lines. But this time Keres responded to my surprise variation with one of his own.

1 . . . P–K4
2 N–KB3 N–QB3
3 B–N5 P–QR3
4 B–R4 N–B3
5 O–O B–K2
6 Q–K2

The little-known Worrall Attack, on which I was relying for a surprise advantage.

6 . . . P–QN4
7 B–N3 P–Q3

Keres suggests here the possible wild continuation 7 . . . O–O 8 P–B3 P–Q4 but does not consider the sacrifice really sound.

8 P–QR4

The move on which I had counted. The accepted reply at that time was 8 . . . R–QN1 9 PxP PxP *10* P–B3 O–O *11* P–Q4, and now White, in addition to a strong center formation, has control of the QR-file.

8 . . . B–N5!

The ingenious counter, which Keres found on the spur of the moment.

9 P–B3

Of course not 9 PxP? N–Q5.

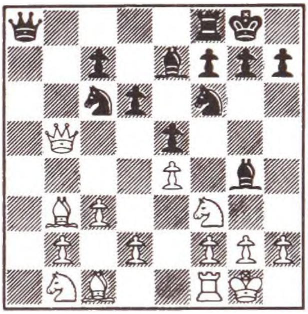
9 . . . O–O!

The point: this perfectly sound pawn sacrifice equalizes for Black.

10 PxP

Overestimating the value of the pawn. Better was *10* P–R3 B–R4 *11* P–Q3, when the positions are about even.

10 . . . PxP
11 RxR QxR
12 QxP



12 . . . N–R2!

The point: Black regains the pawn with a better game.

During the game both of us thought that we were playing something novel; later, as Keres points out, it turns out that this entire variation had been tried in a game Rogmann–Rellstab, 1935, which had ended in a draw.

13 Q–K2

Rogmann tried *13* Q–R5 in the game cited above but got nowhere either. Once I had realized that the "innovation" was bad for me, I began to try to pull a draw out of the position.

13 . . . QxP
14 QxQ NxQ

White already has a difficult game, since on the natural continuation *15* B–Q1 N–B4! is hard to counter; e.g., *16* P–Q4 N–Q6 *17* B–K3 (there is no time for *17* PxP because this Bishop is loose) P–K5 *18* KN–Q2 BxB *19* RxB NxNP, winning a pawn. Hence White reluctantly submits to the disruption of his pawns.

15 P–Q4 BxN
16 PxB N–KN4

Black continues forcefully, leaving White with only the choice of various unpleasant alternatives. If here *17* BxN BxB *18* PxP PxP *19* B–B4 (the threat was . . . R–N1) R–Q1 *20* R–K1 B–B5, White still cannot free himself, so that, in spite of the opposite colored Bishops, White's game remains quite difficult.

17 K–N2 R–N1
18 B–QB4 PxP
19 PxP N–K3

Hitting hard at the White pawns and again preventing White from developing properly.

20 P–Q5

Keres states that "Fine certainly did not make this move gladly," but I felt that the complications would now turn out in my favor, with the two Bishops and the cramping center pawn.

20 . . . N–B4
21 N–B3

At last!

21 . . . N–B1

Keres criticizes this move, recommending instead the immediate *21* . . . R–N5, giving as the probable continuation *22* R–K1 K–B1 *23* B–B1 P–B4 followed by . . . B–B3, with a strong initiative. However, there is a better reply for White after *21* . . . R–N5: 22 B–K3!, for if then 22 . . . RxB *23* R–R1 N–Q6 (*23* . . . RxN *24* PxR N–N4 *25* P–QB4 N–B6 26 R–R7 is satisfactory for White, as is *23* . . . N–B1 *24* R–R8) *24* RxN, and if now *24* . . . NxNP *25* N–N5, with an easy game.

22 R–K1 K–B1
23 R–K2

A questionable move, but White is already lost. If 23 N–K4 R–N5, and if 23 N–N5, as in the game, 23 . . . N–N3 *24* P–N3 NxQP wins a pawn.

23 . . . P–B4?

With this move Black throws away his advantage.

Correct was, as Keres points out, 23 . . . R–N5!, when the Bishop has no good moves. If *24* B–R2 N–Q6 wins a pawn, while if *24* B–QN5 N–R2 *25* B–B6 NxB *26* PxN R–QB5 and Black wins.

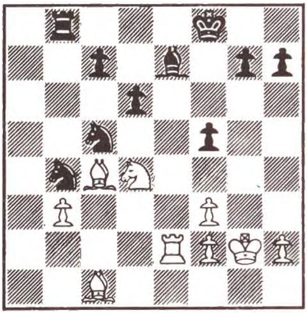
24 N–N5!

Now this is effective.

24 . . . N–N3
25 P–N3 NxQP
26 N–Q4

On the alternative 26 NxQP BxN 27 BxN NxP 28 R–N2 B–R6 29 RxN RxR 30 BxR BxB, the ensuing ending would probably be drawn, but that did not seem quite certain, whereas the text looked good. I was even beginning to have visions of winning here.

26 . . . N–N5



27 B–Q2?

Having pulled a lost game out of the fire, I now proceed to lose it again, overlooking the brilliant exchange sacrifice which follows. Correct was the simple 27 NxP B–B3 28 B–B4 threatening NxQP, and White should have no real trouble securing a draw.

27 . . . P–Q4!
28 BxN

On the try 28 B–QN5, there is the pretty reply 28 . . . NxP! 29 RxB! NxN! 30 BxN RxB!, and surprisingly White can, as we used to say, only discover America, while if 31 B–R3 N–B7 wins.

28 . . . RxB
29 N–B6

If instead 29 RxB KxR 30 N–B6ch K–Q3 wins easily enough.

29 . . . PxB!!

The profound point, which I had overlooked.

30 NxR PxP
31 N–Q5

The most plausible try, but the ending is lost no matter what White does. If instead 31 R–N2 K–B2! 32 K–B1 K–K3 33 K–K2 B–B3 34 R–N1 P–N7. There is a trap to be avoided here after 31 R–N2 B–B3? 32 R–N1 P–N7 33 N–Q5, and if 33 . . . B–K4 34 P–B4, with a draw.

31 . . . N–Q6!

Another brilliant and unforeseen continuation. The Bishop cannot be taken either way: if 32 NxB N–B5ch, and if 32 RxB P–N7.

32 R–Q2 P–N7
33 R–Q1 P–B4

Good enough, but not the most precise. Better was 33 . . . N–B8 34 N–B3 B–B3 35 N–N1 K–K2 and the Black QBP will advance.

34 R–QN1 P–QB5
35 K–B1 B–B4!

Keres is out to win more material!

36 K–K2 BxP

This is apparently bad, since 37 N–K3 BxN 38 KxB looks good for White.

37 N–K3 P–B6!

For if now 38 KxN BxN 39 KxP B–B8, and, with the White Rook totally immobilized, Black wins easily.

38 N–B2 N–K8!

Another beautiful continuation. If now 39 NxN BxN 40 K–Q3 B–Q7 immobilizing the Rook again.

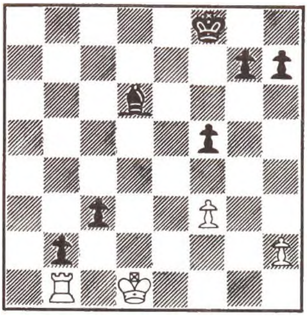
39 N–R3 B–B4?

In time pressure he again gives White a small chance. The most exact was 39 . . . B–R5, with an easy win.

40 KxN?

Which White fails to grasp. The best chance was 40 RxN BxN 41 K–Q3 B–N5, when the Black Bishop is rather awkwardly placed. Best then is 42 K–B2 K–B2 43 R–K5 B–Q3! 44 RxPch K–N3 45 R–N5 BxP 46 KxP B–K4ch! 47 K–Q3 K–B4 48 K–K3 P–N4. Black wins by maneuvering the two passed pawns on the opposite wings; the fact that the Bishop is of the wrong color does not matter here.

40 . . . BxN
41 K–Q1 B–Q3



42 K–B2 BxP
43 R–KR1 B–K4

Somewhat more precise was 43 . . . B–B5 44 RxP K–B2.

44 RxP K–B2
45 R–R1 P–N4
46 R–K1 K–B3
47 R–KN1 K–N3
48 R–K1 B–B3
49 R–KN1 P–N5!

Decisive.

50 PxP P–B5

Threatening . . . K–N4 followed by the advance of the BP.

51 P–N5 B–Q5!

Avoiding the last trap: if 51 . . . BxP? 52 KxP still draws for White.

52 R–Q1 B–K6!
53 KxP

There is no other hope.

53 . . . B–B8
54 R–Q6ch KxP
55 R–N6 P–B6

56	K–Q3	K–B5
57	R–N8	K–N6
	Resigns	

The rest is simple; e.g., 58 R–N8ch K–B7 59 K–B2 K–K7 60 R–K8ch K–B8 *61* R–KB8 P–B7 62 R–B7 K–K7 63 R–K7ch K–B6 64 R–B7ch B–B5 and the BP sails on to victory.

Keres and Tal are two of the greatest combinative players in the history of the game. Their encounters have often been monumental. Here is one in which Keres saw further.

TAL KERES

Curaçao, 1962

Ruy Lopez

1	P–K4	P–K4
2	N–KB3	N–QB3
3	B–N5	P–QR3
4	B–R4	N–B3
5	O–O	B–K2
6	R–K1	

Both sides play well-analyzed lines.

6	. . .	P–QN4
7	B–N3	O–O
8	P–B3	P–Q3
9	P–KR3	N–QR4

Of recent years the alternative . . . N–Q2 has become very popular.

10	B–B2	P–B4
11	P–Q4	N–Q2

The older *11* . . . N–B3 or *11* . . . Q–B2 are both good.

12	QN–Q2	

Keeping his options open.

12	. . .	BPxP

A healthy precaution, since in many lines the blocking of the center with P–Q5 proves to be too painful for Black.

13	PxP	N–QB3
14	P–QR3	

To stop . . . N–QN5. If at once *14* P–Q5 N–N5 *15* B–N1 P–QR4 with a satisfactory game. In an earlier game in this tournament against Keres, Tal had tried *14* N–N3, but after *14* . . . P–QR4 *15* B–K3 P–R5 Black reached easy equality.

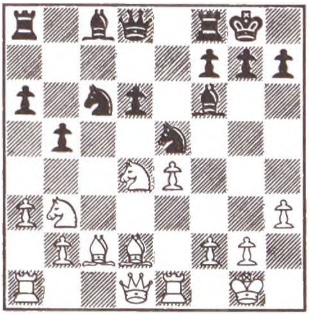
14	. . .	PxP!

The prelude to a surprising combination.

15	N–N3	N(Q2)–K4
16	N(B3)xP	B–B3

Maintaining pressure on the long diagonal and making the development of White's pieces difficult.

17	B–Q2?	



Inviting complications a la Tal. Simpler was 17 NxN NxN 18 R–N1 and develop.

17 . . . NxN
18 NxN N–Q6!!
19 N–B6

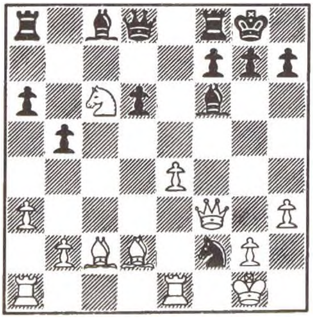
If instead 19 BxN BxN, with continued pressure, since 20 R–N1 is met by 20 . . . Q–B3.

19 . . . NxBP!!!

The key move in a series of combinations almost too deep to calculate over the board.

20 Q–B3

Keres gives this move a question mark, recommending instead 20 Q–R5. In reply he had intended 20 . . . Q–N3; e.g., 21 P–K5 N–K5 dis ch 22 K–R2 BxPch 23 NxB N–B3 with at least equality. But later analysis showed that there was a stronger line after 20 Q–R5 in 20 . . . NxPch 21 K–R2 P–N3. If now 22 NxQ PxQ 23 PxN RxN, with advantage to Black. So White continues 22 Q–B3, when 22 . . . B–K4ch is similar to the game.



20 . . . NxPch!!

But not 20 . . . Q–N3 21 P–K5 N–N5 dis ch 22 B–K3 NxB 23 PxB NxB dis ch 24 K–R1 NxKR 25 RxN, with a dangerous attack.

21 K–R2

The alternatives are no better. If 21 QxN Q–N3ch, and if 21 K–B1 Q–N3 22 P–K5 B–N5! 23 B–K3 BxQ 24 BxQ BxN leaves Black two healthy pawns ahead.

21 . . . B–K4ch!
22 NxB

Avoiding the more complicated line 22 K–R1 Q–R5 23 PxN B–N6 24 N–K7ch K–R1 25 NxB QRxN, which Keres somewhat cavalierly dismisses as an easy win. There is also an easier alternative in the simple 22 . . . Q–B2.

22 . . . PxN
23 KR–Q1

Protecting his Bishop. If 23 B–N4 N–N4 wins.

23 . . . N–B5!

For if now 24 BxN Q–R5ch and . . . PxB. Black has come out of the fearsome complications two healthy pawns to the good.

24 P–KN3

Searching for something.

24 . . . N–K3
25 B–B3

Or 25 B–N4 N–Q5!.

25 . . . Q–N4
26 R–Q6

Loses more material, but there was nothing to be done. If 26 R–Q5 P–B3 is good enough, as is . . . Q–R3ch.

26 . . . Q–R3ch
27 K–N1

Or 27 K–N2 N–B5ch.

27 . . . N–Q5

Winning the exchange. The rest is routine.

28 RxQ NxQch
29 K–B2 PxR
30 KxN R–K1
31 R–R1 K–N2
32 B–N3 B–N2
33 B–Q2 P–B4

The RP is of no consequence.

34 RxP QR–Q1
35 R–N6 BxPch
36 K–K2 B–B6ch
37 K–K1 P–B5!

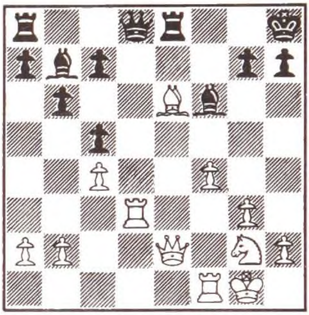
Elegant, but anything wins.

38 B–B3 PxP
39 RxRP R–Q5!

Sacrificial to the last.

40 R–R7ch K–R3
41 R–KB7 and Resigns

Keres—TO PLAY

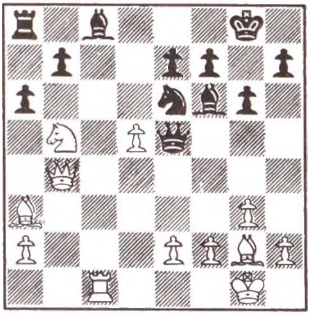


Euwe

9th Match Game, 1940

1 . . . QxR!!
2 QxQ B–Q5ch
3 R–B2 RxB
4 K–B1 QR–K1!
5 P–B5 R–K4
6 P–B6 PxP
7 R–Q2 B–B1!
8 N–B4 R–K6!
9 Q–N1 R–B6ch
10 K–N2 RxN!
11 PxR R–N1ch
12 K–B3 B–N5ch
Resigns

Flohr



Keres—TO PLAY

Semmering-Baden, 1937

1 N–R7!! N–Q5

If 1 . . . RxN 2 RxBch N–B1 3 Q–N6 Q–Q5 4 B–B5, etc.

2 RxBch	**RxR**
3 NxR	**QxKP**
4 P–R4	**N–B4**
5 Q–K4	**Resigns**

Miguel Najdorf

The Polish master, Miguel Najdorf, attracted little attention outside of his own country until the team tournament at Buenos Aires in 1939. During that tournament the war broke out, and Najdorf, together with many other strong European masters, elected to remain in Argentina. Since then he has gone on from one success to another, winning a top prize in almost every tournament in which he has played.

In contrast with a number of his colleagues, Najdorf is characterized by an exuberant self-confidence. "I am going to be world champion" he declared in an interview with a Spanish newspaper in 1947, and after that he made every effort to reach that goal, though finally without success. The quotes from this interview are very revealing.

"My profession does not permit me to devote to chess all the attention that it merits and needs; but if I were to be invited to compete for the World Championship I would dedicate three months to the study of theory, abstaining from displays and casual games, hoping in this way to fill the vacuum in my knowledge of the openings.

"I am thirty-six years old and at the height of my powers. At first I was a 'brilliant' player, loving sacrifices."

Bit by bit he realized that a master cannot have too definite a style, that he must be the "complete player." He felt that he had achieved this highest ambition. Najdorf had applied his greatest energy to learning how to win won games—in almost all of the grandmasters he had observed numerous failures in this aspect of the struggle.

"I believe that I am inferior to none of the players who are to participate in the next World Championship . . . Botvinnik, Fine, Keres, Reshevsky, Euwe. None of these have a better record than I. I have played much less than they have, admittedly, but I am satisfied with my results."

Najdorf disclosed that he had rarely had occasion to play a move other than the one which struck him as best at first sight, in fact that his essential decisions came to him in master tournaments as quickly as if he were giving a simultaneous display. This filled him with confidence.

"I believe that I have the least book knowledge of all the masters; all are my superiors in theory. But as Kmoch and Tartakower (my teacher) have said, it is in the middle game and endgame that a good chessplayer reveals himself."

Najdorf did not make good his boast about being world champion; in fact he could not hold his own too well in the qualifying tournament at Budapest in 1950. But there is a remarkable persistence in the man. He has improved steadily at an age when most masters decline, and his later achievements are his best.

In native ability for the game Najdorf is probably anybody's equal. In quick chess he is superb, and in blindfold chess incredibly phenomenal; in Brazil in 1947 he set the world's record of 45 games. What he lacked was the patience to build up a solid positional game; had he acquired that he might have reached the top.

Najdorf first attracted world wide attention in 1935 when he won a game which has been called the "Polish Immortal."

GLUCKSBERG NAJDORF

Warsaw, 1935

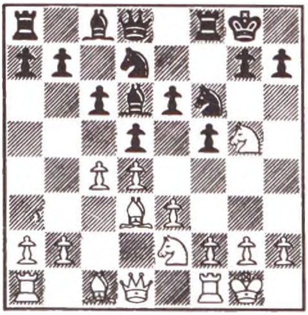
Dutch Defense

1 P–Q4	P–KB4
2 P–QB4	N–KB3
3 N–QB3	P–K3
4 N–B3	P–Q4
5 P–K3?	

Positionally weak; 5 P–KN3 is to be preferred.

5 . . .	P–B3
6 B–Q3	B–Q3
7 O–O	O–O
8 N–K2	QN–Q2
9 N–N5?	

White just maneuvers and makes mistakes.



9 . . .	BxPch!
10 K–R1	

On *10* KxB N–N5ch regains the piece.

10 . . .	N–N5!
11 P–B4	Q–K1
12 P–KN3	Q–R4
13 K–N2	B–N8!!
14 NxB	Q–R7ch
15 K–B3	

It is not clear yet what Black has for the piece; it soon will be.

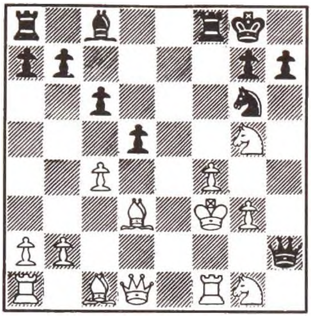
15 . . .	P–K4!!!

The decisive break.

16 QPxP	QNxPch
17 PxN	NxPch
18 K–B4	N–N3ch
19 K–B3	P–B5!

Threatening . . . QxP mate.

20 KPxP



20 . . .	B–N5ch!!
21 KxB	N–K4ch!!
22 PxN	P–R4 mate!!

For sheer wealth of imagination this game is hard to equal.

In his first encounter with Botvinnik, Najdorf did splendidly. The game was played in the last round, when Botvinnik was assured of first prize regardless of the outcome; but the result must have given Najdorf much personal satisfaction anyhow.

NAJDORF BOTVINNIK

Groningen, 1946

Nimzo-Indian Defense

1 P–Q4	P–K3
2 P–QB4	

He declines the invitation to a French Defense.

2 . . .	N–KB3

And he declines the invitation to a Dutch Defense.

3 N–QB3	B–N5
4 Q–B2	P–Q4
5 PxP	PxP
6 P–QR3	

Avoiding Botvinnik's favorite line: 6 B–N5 P–KR3.

6 . . .	BxNch
7 PxB!	

A surprise which works out well.

7 . . .	P–B4
8 N–B3	Q–R4
9 N–Q2!	B–Q2
10 N–N3	Q–R5
11 Q–N2	

White has the two Bishops and much positional pressure in the center.

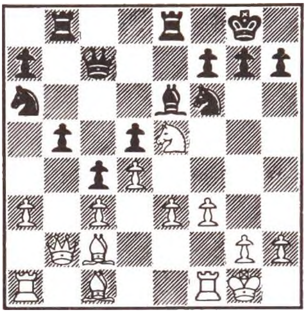
11 . . .	N–R3
12 P–K3	P–B5

A dangerous decision. 12 . . . R–B1 and eventually . . . PxP was better.

13 N–Q2	O–O
14 B–K2	P–QN4
15 B–Q1	Q–R4
16 B–B2	KR–K1
17 O–O	QR–N1
18 N–B3!	

A subtle idea, which is stronger than the routine P–B3 and P–K4.

18 . . .	Q–B2
19 N–K5	B–K3
20 P–B3	



The respective strategies are now clear—Black will advance on the Q-side, White will attack on the K-side.

20 . . . N–B4
21 B–Q2 N–R5
22 Q–N1!

Preparing to transfer the Queen to the K-side.

22 . . . R–N3
23 Q–K1 N–Q2
24 Q–R4

White's attack is in full swing. Botvinnik has been forced into the role of a passive defender, one which he thoroughly dislikes.

24 . . . N–B1
25 P–K4 P–B3
26 N–N4 N–N3
27 Q–R5

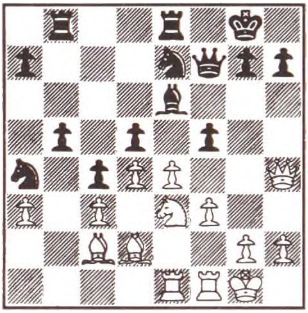
Pinning the Knight!

27 . . . Q–B2
28 QR–K1 R(N3)–N1
29 N–K3! N–K2

The difficulties mount. If instead 29 . . . N–B5 30 QxQch BxQ 31 NxBP NxNP 32 KxN QPxN 33 R–QN1 wins the ending.

30 Q–R4 P–B4?

A definite mistake; 30 . . . N–N3 offered better chances.



31 P–N4! P–B5

There is no longer any defense. If 31 . . . BPxKP 32 PxP N–N3 33 Q–R5 wins easily.

32 PxP! N–N3
33 PxB RxP
34 BxN(N6)

The rest is easy.

34 . . . PxB
35 N–N2 QR–K1
36 RxR RxR
37 NxP R–KB3
38 Q–N5 NxP
39 BxN RxN
40 K–N2 Resigns

Najdorf has never repeated his Polish Immortal, but sometimes he plays games where the opponent does not know what hit him. Here is one.

KRAMER **NAJDORF**

New York, 1948–49

Gruenfeld Defense

1	P–Q4	N–KB3
2	P–QB4	P–KN3
3	N–QB3	P–Q4
4	Q–N3	PxP
5	QxBP	B–N2
6	N–B3	O–O
7	P–K4	

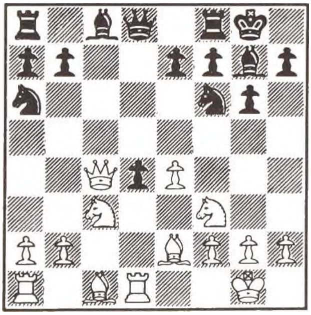
The natural move, against which Najdorf has a prepared variation.

7	. . .	N–R3!
8	B–K2	P–B4
9	O–O?	

A decisive mistake. 9 P–Q5 is about the only playable move.

9	. . .	PxP
10	R–Q1	

If 10 NxP NxP!.



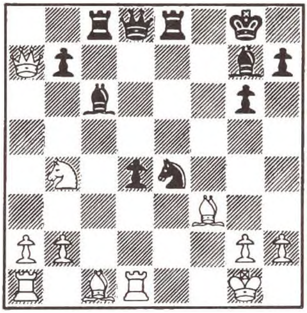
10 . . . P–K4!!

The brilliant refutation.

11	NxKP	N–Q2!
12	NxN	BxN
13	N–Q5	R–B1
14	Q–N3	N–B4
15	Q–QR3	R–K1!

After a series of forced moves White finds himself faced by an overwhelming attack.

16	P–B3	P–B4!
17	QxP	PxP
18	PxP	NxP
19	B–B3	B–QB3
20	N–N4	



20 . . . N–B7!!

A bolt from the Argentine.

21 NxB

There is nothing better. If 21 KxN Q–R5ch 22 K–B1 B–N4ch and wins.

21 . . . NxR!!

The point. Black's Queen may not be captured because of the mating threat.

22	B–Q2	PxN
23	RxN	P–Q6

Black is the exchange ahead and his attack continues.

24 Q–R6 Q–Q5ch
25 K–R1 QxP
26 Q–B4ch

Or 26 QxP QR–Q1.

26 . . . K–R1
27 P–KR3 P–B4
28 P–QR4 Q–Q5
29 QxQ BxQ
30 B–KN4 R–B2
31 B–QR5 R–B2
32 B–N6 R–B7!

So that if 33 RxP R–K8ch and B–K4ch.

33 P–R5 P–Q7
34 K–R2 R–K8
35 K–N3 RxR
Resigns

Laszlo Szabo

Throughout the chess ages Hungary has continued to produce outstanding chess masters. One of her major postwar contenders was Laszlo Szabo, born in 1917. His style was primarily on the aggressive order; his games are full of bold undertakings which lead to very pretty play. Here is a fine win of his from the first great postwar tournament.

SZABO KOTOV

Groningen, 1946

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 N–QB3 P–Q4
4 N–B3 P–B4
5 P–K3

An apparently quiet line which is not so silent as it appears.

5 . . . N–B3
6 P–QR3 B–K2

Black does better to play PxBP first.

7 PxBP BxP
8 P–QN4 B–N3
9 B–N2 O–O
10 B–K2

10 PxP was more accurate.

10 . . . PxP
11 BxP Q–K2

The exchange of Queens is not so favorable for Black: his King is badly placed for the endgame.

12 O–O P–QR3
13 Q–B2 B–B2
14 N–KN5!

A bold conception, which lends a most original twist to the game. The idea is that on 14 . . . P–KR3?? 15 N–Q5!! wins, for if 15 . . . PxN(Q4) 16 BxN.

14 . . . BxPch!?

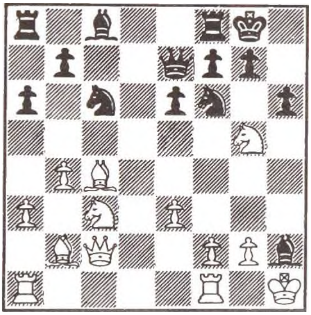
The annotators have given this move a question mark, but it is difficult to suggest better. If 14 . . . P–KN3 15 P–B4! continues the attack. 14 . . . N–K4 looks best.

15 K–R1!

Of course not *15* KxB N–N5ch.

15 . . . P–R3?

But this loses quickly. The best defense was *15* . . . B–K4 *16* P–B4 BxN *17* BxB P–KN3 with a complicated position.



16 N–Q5!!

Decisive.

16 . . . PxN(Q4)
17 BxN B–B4
18 QxB P–KN3
19 QxPch

An unnecessary refinement. After *19* BxQ PxQ *20* BxR, White is a Rook and a piece ahead; some of it goes back, but he still wins hands down.

19 . . . PxQ
20 BxPch R–B2
21 BxQ PxN
22 KxB NxB
23 BxRch KxB
24 QR–B1

With the exchange and a pawn to the good the win is easy.

24 . . . N–B3
25 KR–Q1 K–K3
26 R–B5 R–R1ch

He has scored a check anyhow.

27 K–N3 R–R4
28 R(Q1)–Q5 R–R1
29 RxP Resigns

As we have seen, Szabo excels in complicated positions. Here is another sample of his art.

SZABO BOOK

Saltsjobaden, 1948

Catalan Opening

1 N–KB3 P–Q4
2 P–KN3 N–KB3
3 B–N2 P–K3

Not the best defensive plan but good enough.

4 O–O B–K2
5 P–B4 O–O
6 P–Q4 P–B3

6 . . . P–B4 was the simplest way to equalize.

7 N–B3 P–QN3
8 N–K5 B–R3

Patented by Book, says the Dutch note, which adds that he has never lost a game with it. There's always a first time . . . (rest of sentence censored).

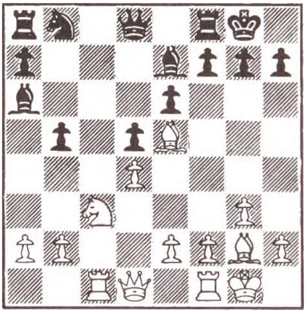
9 PxP BPxP
10 B–B4 KN–Q2
11 R–B1

Playing it safe. White had a brilliant speculative alternative available in *11* NxQP! PxN *12*

NxBP!! RxN *13* BxP, which seems to give him an advantage in most variations; e.g., *13* . . . N–KB3 *14* BxR QN–Q2 *15* B–N2 with Rook and three pawns for the two pieces. But Black can reply *13* . . . N–QB3 *14* BxN N–B3 *15* BxR QxB with excellent prospects for a counterattack.

11 . . . **NxN**
12 **BxN** **P–QN4?**

Consistent—and bad. *12* . . . N–Q2 is essential to reduce White's advantage to a minimum.



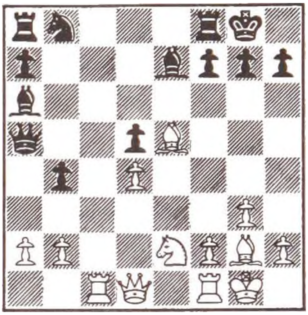
13 **P–K4!**

A routine application of elementary principles. From here on, Black does not get time to breathe.

13 . . . **P–N5**
14 **N–K2** **Q–R4**

A desperate search. The trouble is that *14* . . . B–N2 is refuted by *15* R–B7.

15 **PxP** PxP



16 **N–B4!**

Of course! The fireworks begin.

16 . . . **BxR**
17 **Q–N4** **P–N3**

Forced, for if *17* . . . P–B3, there is a beautiful finish with *18* BxPch K–R1 *19* N–N6ch PxN *20* Q–R4 mate.

18 **BxP**

Threatening *19* NxP and mate next.

18 . . . **B–Q6**

The only chance. On *18* . . . N–Q2 *19* QxN wins simply enough.

19 **BxR** **B–KB4**
20 **Q–K2** **B–N4**

Black has lost a pawn and his game is hopelessly cramped.

21 **P–KR4** **BxN**
22 **BxB** **N–Q2**
23 **B–B3** **B–K3**

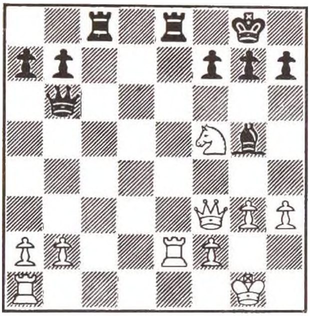
Hoping against hope. On *23* . . . QxP *24* P–Q5 is too strong.

24 B–Q6! **Resigns**

For White wins the exchange. On *24* . . . R–Q1 25 B–B7 decides; on *24* . . . R–K1 25 P–Q5 and it is all over.

Finally here is a splendid finish from another Szabo game.

Milner-Barry



Szabo—TO PLAY

Hastings, 1938–39

1 Q–B3!!

Threatening QxNP mate.

1 . . . **Q–N3**

If *1* . . . Q–KB3 2 N–K7ch!.

2 QR–K1!! K–B1

Loses, but there was no move. If 2 . . . R–B1 3 QxR!.

3 Q–B5ch!!! **Resigns**

A highly original combination.

Isaac Boleslavsky

Born in 1919, Boleslavsky scored his first major success in the U.S.S.R. Championship in 1940 when he tied for 5th place with Botvinnik. In 1950 he narrowly missed a chance to play for the world title. Since then he has been outdistanced. Today evidently the heyday of a chess master is short indeed, shorter than ever before.

Here is one of Boleslavsky's great victories, one of the most beautiful games in this collection.

KOTOV BOLESLAVSKY

Moscow, 1945

Queen's Pawn Game

1 P–Q4 **N–KB3**
2 B–N5

A little-used variation, also worth little.

2 . . . **N–K5**
3 B–B4 **P–Q3**
4 P–KB3 **N–KB3**
5 P–K4 **P–KN3**
6 Q–Q2 **QN–Q2**
7 B–KR6

Ordinarily good, this move is a great loss of time.

7 . . . BxB
8 QxB P–B4!
9 P–B3 Q–N3
10 Q–Q2

A fatal retreat.

10 . . . PxP
11 PxP

Black is now better developed and initiates an attack of dazzling brilliancy.

11 . . . P–K4!
12 N–QR3 P–Q4!
13 PxKP N(Q2)xP
14 B–N5ch

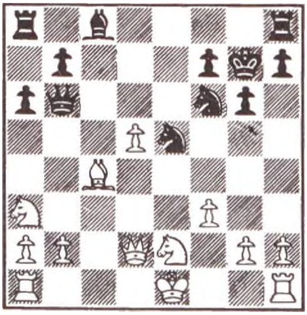
Hoping for 14 . . . B–Q2 15 BxBch and 16 N–K2, which would free him slightly.

14 . . . K–B1!

For 15 Q–R6ch K–N1 leads to another blind alley for the White Queen.

15 PxP K–N2
16 N–K2 P–QR3
17 B–B4

If 17 B–R4 B–B4 and . . . QR–Q1.



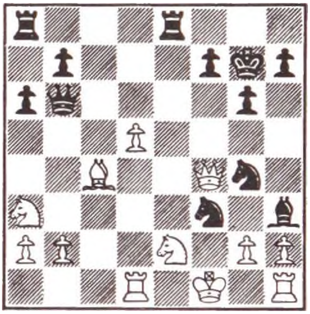
17 . . . R–K1

Black's attack is now fully launched.

18 R–Q1 B–R6!!
19 K–B1 NxBP!
20 Q–B4

Or 20 Q–B3 R–K6.

20 . . . N–N5!



Too many Black pieces crowd in!

21 QxN(B3) N–K6ch
22 K–K1 BxP
23 Q–B2 BxR
24 R–Q3 Q–N5ch
25 R–Q2 QR–B1

Or 25 . . . NxB. The finish is easy.

26 B–N3 BxP!
27 BxB NxB
28 Q–Q4ch QxQ
29 RxQ N–B3

Anything else also wins.

Resigns

Arturito Pomar

During World War II no new adult masters appeared. But a child was born—another of the rare wonder-children in Caissa's history. He is the Spaniard Arturito Pomar, who played in the Spanish championship at ten and became a full-fledged master at thirteen.

Pomar was born at Palma, Majorca, on September 1, 1931. He learned the moves from his father at the age of five and was winning all their games within a few months. For a number of years after that his progress was not spectacular, until at the age of ten he became subchampion of the Balearic Isles. The champion, Dr. Ticoulat, was unable to play in the Spanish championship, and because of this lucky accident Arturito was admitted instead. In the preliminaries he did quite well, but in the finals he scored only three points—finishing last. At that, to score three points in a national championship at ten years of age is in itself an incredible feat.

By that time he had become known and lionized. He spoke over Radio Madrid, was filmed, and the president of the Spanish Chess Federation presented him with a magnificent board. A group of Madrid enthusiasts gave him a bicycle, and the Spanish Ministry of Education resolved to grant him a scholarship to assist in his schooling.

The press ran an interesting interview with his mother. "Arturito is a prodigy," she said, "in anything connected with calculation and concentration." But apart from this he had the normal mentality for children of his age. "When he wins, his delight is infinite; when he loses, he is just as disconsolate as any little boy who breaks a toy. One of his greatest pleasures is in children's books, comics . . . he also loves his bicycle; he makes me promise that when he wins, he shall be allowed an hour's ride on this diabolical machine; and when he loses, I have to let him ride it to console himself."

After the Spanish Championship his family moved to Spain proper, and Arturito regularly gave simultaneous exhibitions and placed in national tournaments. Soon he got to be Spain's leading player.

Pomar's first trial in a tournament outside his own country was at London in 1946. He finished tied for sixth in his section. Since then he has played in other tournaments without much success. Thus unlike the other boy wonders he has not matured to world-championship caliber.

The first serious performance which attracted world-wide attention was a draw with Alekhine, his teacher, at Gijon in 1944. And what a game it was! Many a grandmaster could be proud of it. How a boy of thirteen could have acquired such extensive opening knowledge, such a profound grasp of position play, and such a quick appreciation of tactical possibilities passes human understanding, but Arturito possessed these qualities.

ALEKHINE POMAR

Gijon, 1944
Ruy Lopez

1 P-K4 P-K4
2 N-KB3 N-QB3
3 B-N5 P-QR3
4 B-R4 N-B3
5 O-O P-Q3

One of Alekhine's favorites. Could he be playing psychological chess at thirteen??

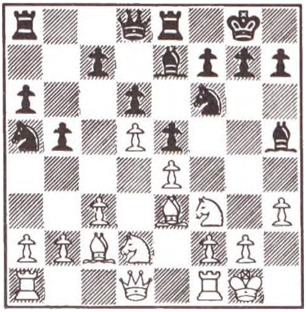
6 P-B3 B-N5

An original twist which shows how deep his understanding of the openings is.

7 P-Q4 P-QN4
8 B-N3 B-K2
9 B-K3 O-O
10 QN-Q2 R-K1

The maneuvering shows how thoroughly familiar he is with positional chess. Black's objective is to compel White to lock the center.

11 P-KR3 B-R4
12 P-Q5 N-R4
13 B-B2



13 . . . R-QB1?

Waste of time. *13 . . .* P-B4 should have been played at once. In spite of this error, Arturito manages to hold his own.

14 P-QR4 P-B4
15 PxP PxP
16 P-KN4 B-N3
17 N-R4! N-Q2!

Rising to the occasion. On *17 . . .* BxP? *18* NxB NxN *19* BxN BxN *20* P-N5! gives White a crushing attack.

18 N-B5 BxN
19 NPxB

Clearly indicating his intentions—attack along the KN-file.

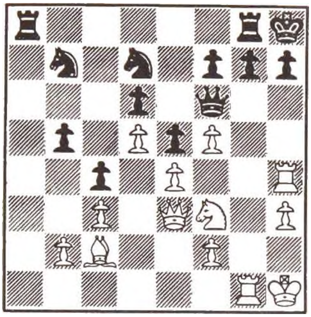
19 . . . B-N4
20 Q-K2 P-B5!

The usual counterattack on the Q-side. One continues to marvel—how does he know so much?

21 K-R1 R-R1
22 R-KN1 BxB
23 QxB Q-B3
24 R-N4 K-R1

Not entirely necessary; he could also have allowed the exchange of the two Rooks for the Queen by *24 . . .* N-N2. But it is understandable that he would play it safe against Alekhine.

25 QR-KN1 R-KN1
26 N-B3 N-N2
27 R-R4



27 . . . R–R3?

Hereabouts he becomes too cautious. 27 . . . R–R7 was preferable.

28 Q–N5 N–Q1!
29 Q–R5 N–B1
30 N–R2 P–N3!
31 Q–R6 Q–N2
32 N–N4 P–B3!

Defending himself with great calm.

33 PxP

The threat was . . . P–N4.

33 . . . QxP
34 Q–K3 Q–N4!
35 R–R6 QxQ
36 PxQ N–Q2!

Defends the pawn indirectly. On 37 NxBP RxRch 38 KxR K–N2! saves the day.

37 R–KB1 R–R7

Content to draw against the great Alekhine.

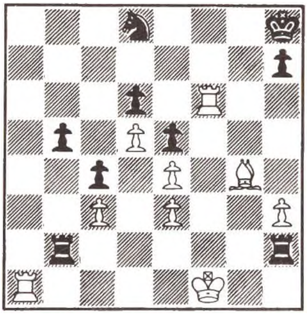
38 NxBP NxN
39 R(R6)xN RxP
40 B–Q1 R(N1)–N7
41 B–B3 R–KN6
42 B–N4 R(N6)–N7
43 R–R1!?

Alekhine dislikes drawing—and as usual he almost manages to lose.

43 . . . R–R7ch
44 K–N1 R(R7)–N7ch
45 K–B1

Still trying to win.

45 . . . R–KR7



46 K–K1?

He would rather lose than draw.

46 . . . P–N5?

Missing a great chance. 46 . . . N–N2, threatening . . . N–B4–Q6 and mate, wins at once; e.g., 47 R–R7 R–R8ch 48 R–B1 R–N8ch decides.

47 PxP P–B6
48 R–QB1 P–R4!
49 B–Q1 K–N2
50 R–B1 P–B7
51 B–K2 N–B2
52 K–Q2 RxNP

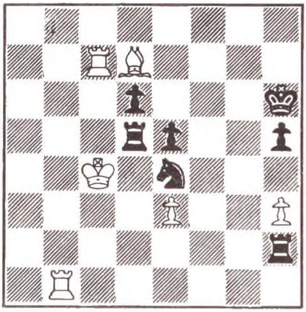
53 RxP	N–N4
54 R–QB7ch	K–N3
55 K–B3	R–R5
56 B–N5?	

After one try to get a win out of a drawn position—a try which should have lost—Alekhine goes in for another which should also lose! 56 K–N3 was necessary.

56 . . .	NxPch
57 K–N3	R(R5)–R7!
58 R–N1ch	K–R3
59 R–N1	R(QR7)–Q7
60 B–Q7!	

A last hope.

60 . . .	RxQP
61 K–B4	



61 . . .	R–B7ch?

Missing his second and last chance. 61 . . . R(Q4)–Q7 wins, since Black's QP can safely advance.

62 KxR	RxR
63 KxN	RxB
64 P–R4	P–Q4ch

Forces the draw, but a win was no longer possible.

65 KxP	R–K2ch
66 K–B5	RxP
67 R–N6ch	K–R2
68 R–Q6	R–K5
69 R–Q7ch	K–R3
70 R–Q6ch	K–R2
71 R–Q7ch	K–R3

Drawn.

Svetozar Gligoric

The first new star in the chess firmament to appear after World War II was the Yugoslav Svetozar Gligoric. Born in Belgrade in 1923, he won the championship of the strong Belgrade Chess Club in 1938 when he was only fifteen. The next year he acquired the title of National Master, a prestigious one in a country which has consistently been second to the U.S.S.R. in world competition.

Because of the war his chess activities were naturally curtailed. He saw action as a partisan against the Nazis and was decorated for bravery.

Shortly after the war ended, he scored his first important international victory by winning a tournament at Warsaw in 1947, ahead of Smvslov and other top masters.

In 1949 he won first prize in the Yugoslav championship, a feat which he later duplicated on ten more occasions. After a brief try at university studies, he turned professional. In the period from 1945 to 1970 he was probably the most active chess master in the world, traveling far and wide to play in one tournament after another. While he never quite made the world championship class, he was always a strong contender.

In the following game, marked by a series of brilliant sacrifices, he defeated a man who was later to become world champion.

GLIGORIC PETROSIAN

Belgrade, 1954

Benoni Defense Deferred

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–B4

Rejected by almost everybody before the war as too risky, this defense was then rehabilitated to become one of the major weapons of all tournament players. Its success depends on a variety of tactical finesses.

3 P–Q5

Straightforward. *3* PxP is met by *3* . . . Q–R4ch *4* N–B3 N–K5, with easy equality.

3 . . . P–K4

3 . . . P–K3 is also played, though after *4* P–KN3 Black's game remains more cramped; however, there are enough countermaneuvers available to make it playable.

4 N–QB3 P–Q3
5 P–K4 QN–Q2

The order of moves is not too important; Black gets his counterplay with . . . P–QR3 and . . . P–QN4.

6 N–B3 P–QR3
7 B–K2 B–K2
8 O–O O–O
9 N–K1

White gets his counterplay by attacking on the K-side. The text prepares P–KB4 at an opportune moment.

9 . . . N–K1

Black too is prepared to try . . . P–KB4.

10 N–Q3

If at once *10* P–B4 PxP *11* BxP B–B3 *12* N–Q3 Q–K2 and Black can occupy the strong point at K4.

10 . . . N–B2

Threatening . . . P–QN4.

11 P–QR4 R–N1

More consistent was *11* . . . P–QN3 to block the advance of the White RP.

12 B–K3

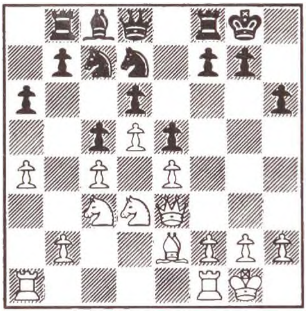
A slight trap: if now *12* . . . P–QN4 *13* RPxP PxP *14* PxP NxP *15* NxN RxN *16* NxKP, winning a pawn, since Black's Rook is under attack.

12 . . . B–N4

Freeing himself somewhat.

13 Q–Q2 BxB
14 QxB P–R3

Preparing an eventual . . . Q–N4.



15 P–R5!

Weakening the Black Q-side.

15 . . . P–QN4
16 PxP e.p. NxNP
17 P–QN3 R–R1

A peculiar move, of the kind which has made Petrosian famous. There is no direct threat and no direct defense, so he manuevers until something opens up.

18 P–B4!

So something opens up right away. White has a strong initiative.

18 . . . PxP
19 QxKBP

Threatening to secure an overwhelming game with P–K5; so Black's reply is forced.

19 . . . P–B3
20 N–Q1!

White now returns to the K-side, seeking points of entry.

20 . . . Q–K2

Petrosian's task is not easy. The natural defensive line is to seek to place a Knight at the strong point at K4, but this is blocked for tactical reasons at the moment (if *20* . . . N–Q2 *21* QxQP). Against a more passive move such as *20* . . . N–K1 *21* N–K3 N–Q2 White can play 22 R–B3, and Black remains completely on the defensive. At that, however, such a dogged defense might have been preferable to what he played.

21 N–K3 P–N4?!

He must already have felt desperate to resort to such a weakening of his King position. The alternative was *21* . . . N–K1 and . . . N–Q2, as in the previous note.

22 N–B5 BxN

Forced, but now Black's position has so many holes that it is untenable. Gligoric's exploitation of his opponent's weaknesses is a classic.

23 QxB Q–R2
24 Q–N4 QR–K1
25 R–B5

Naturally.

25 . . . N–Q2
26 QR–KB1 R–K2

There is no easy way to liberate himself. If instead 26 . . . N–K4 27 NxN RxN 28 RxBP RxR 29 RxR RxKP 30 Q–B3 Q–K2 31 B–Q3 R–K8ch 32 K–B2 R–QR8 33 R–N6ch K–R1 34 RxPch K–N1 35 R–N6ch and wins.

But while White's position is clearly overwhelming, it is not at all clear how he will break through. Gligoric shows the way.

27 P–N4!!

The decisive breakthrough suddenly comes on the Q-side.

27 . . . PxP

If 27 . . . KR–K1 28 PxP RxP 29 Q–N3 RxB 30 QxQP N–R1 31 P–B6 wins easily enough.

28 P–B5

The point: the fork of Rook and Knight is devastating.

28 . . . P–KR4!

An ingenious try anyhow.

29 Q–N3

Naturally not 29 QxP?? QxQ 30 BxQ RxP and Black is out of the mess.

29 . . . RxP

The only try; now of course it is insufficient.

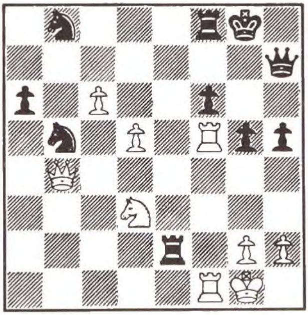
30 P–B6!! RxB

There is nothing to be done. If 30 . . . N–K4 31 NxN QPxN 32 B–Q3 R–N5 33 RxPch!! PxR 34 BxQch, while if 30 . . . N–N3 31 QxQP RxB 32 RxPch wins.

31 QxP N–N4

Again, if 31 . . . N–N3 32 RxPch decides.

32 QxNP! N–N1



White now provides a blazing finish.

33 RxPch! K–B2

Naturally he cannot take the Rook because of QxR mate.

34 RxPch!!	**KxR**
35 QxRch	**KxR**
36 P–R4ch	**Resigns**

It is mate next move: if 36 . . . KxP or 36 . . . K–N5 37 Q–B4 mate, while if 36 . . . K–N3 37 N–B4 mate.

The excitement aroused in the Yugoslavian audience by the victory of their national champion was so great that the police had to be called to restore quiet.

10.

The Age of Botvinnik

With the advent of Botvinnik to the world championship in 1948 the Soviet Union definitely became the leading chess country in the world. Until Fischer dethroned Spassky in 1972 Soviet masters held the world championship, although Botvinnik, defeated by Petrosian, retired in 1963. The supremacy of the Soviet champions has brought about, to use an Americanism, a whole new ball game.

Mikhail Moiseievich Botvinnik was born in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad) in 1911, the son of a doctor. He learned to play chess at the age of twelve, won the title of master at the age of sixteen, and first won the Soviet championship in 1931 at the age of twenty. Prior to these feats he had first attracted public attention by beating Capablanca in a simultaneous exhibition game, in 1925 when he was only fourteen.

In that period the Soviet masters, though strong, were in no way exceptional. Botvinnik catapulted to the rank of a world figure by tying a match in 1933 with Salo Flohr, then considered Alekhine's leading rival among the younger players. Thereafter he consistently maintained his position at the top or near it for some thirty years, a feat equaled historically only by Lasker and Steinitz. Though he lost on a number of occasions, he always made a comeback until he stopped competing.

At Moscow in 1935 he tied for first prize with Flohr, ahead of most of the world's leading players except Alekhine, who had fled the Soviet Union right after the revolution. In 1936 he finished second to Capablanca at Moscow, then tied for first with the Cuban at Nottingham, this time with Alekhine participating. By now it had become clear that there was a special elite group of eight grandmasters, clearly head and shoulders above the rest of the crowd, of which Botvinnik was one.

In 1938 came the battle among these eight; Botvinnik finished third, behind Fine and Keres, though he had the satisfaction of beating both Alekhine and Capablanca. This must nevertheless have been quite a disappointment to him, since he alibied by making up a story that on playing days the masters got nothing to eat and that the excessive traveling (in Holland!) tired him out too much. Needless to say, both of these excuses are absurd. The distances in Holland are so small that they would be considered rides to the suburbs in any large city in the world.

During the war, after a poor showing in the Soviet championship in 1940 (fifth), he took first in the so-called Absolute Championship in 1941. At the first big postwar tournament at Groningen (Holland) in 1946 he again took first, a half-point ahead of Euwe.

In the meantime his other rivals either declined, died, or retired, leaving him a clear favorite in the world championship tournament of 1948, which he won by a wide margin.

By profession an electrical engineer, he then withdrew from active chess again to finish his doctorate. His thesis was "The Influence of Excitation Fluctuations on the Vibration of the Synchronic Machine Rotor." Vidmar, the Yugoslavian grandmaster, had always been a hero of his. At the Nottingham tournament Botvinnik expressed the wish that he could be as gifted in electrical engineering as Vidmar, who in turn hoped that he could be as gifted in chess as Botvinnik. With his thesis he was nearing both the goals of his productive life.

17
11
the

Thereafter his serious chess was confined almost entirely to matches for the world championship with his younger rivals. Sidestepping the new genius Fischer on the basis of legal technicalities (which he in turn had ignored when he challenged Alekhine in 1946), he played only the Soviet champions who climbed up the FIDE ladder.

Surprisingly his results against these newcomers were none too overwhelming. The first one, against Bronstein in 1951, was drawn, allowing the champion to retain his title (the rules stipulated that the challenger must score 12½ points out of 24). In the second, against Smyslov in 1954, the result was again a draw. Finally, in 1957, after Smyslov had once more won the right to a match, he lost, Smyslov having scored six wins to his three with thirteen draws. Undismayed, he took advantage of his right to a return match and, to everybody's surprise, defeated his younger rival by a score of six to five with twelve draws.

Two years later a similar result occurred against the phenomenally gifted Tal. In the first match in 1960, Botvinnik lost, winning only two games to Tal's six and drawing thirteen. By then the age difference was enormous: Botvinnik was 49 and Tal 23. Nevertheless he persisted in a return match and once again did the seemingly impossible, regaining the title in a hard-fought battle in which he won ten games to Tal's five with only six draws.

Persisting in his pattern of a poor start with a brilliant finish, he lost to the next challenger, Petrosian, in 1963, winning two games to his rival's five with fifteen draws. But then the FIDE, faced with the persistent charge that Soviet masters were throwing games to one another to let a Soviet man stay on top, suddenly changed the rules, depriving the champion of the automatic right to a return match. Incensed by this action, Botvinnik announced his retirement, at the relatively early age of 53. Occasional tournaments afterward showed that he was still a formidable opponent but no longer the best in the world.

In his later years he took an active interest in the development of computer chess, in which Euwe had also participated. He has published an algorithm for computer chess, but American experts state that it cannot be evaluated without extensive trials. In actual play the Soviet computer, headed by Botvinnik, has been victorious against several American ones. Perhaps he may some day become the computer chess champion of the world as well!

In his approach to the game Botvinnik has particularly emphasized the constant need for hard work. In his autobiographical notes he writes:

> If you are going to make your mark among masters, you have to work far harder and more intensively, or, to put it more exactly, the work is far more complex than that needed to gain the title of Master. To begin with, you find yourself up against experienced, technically well-trained tournament players. And then, if your advance is swift, others play against you far more energetically.
>
> And, thirdly, every successive step up the ladder grows more difficult.
>
> At this stage you have to learn how to analyze and comment on games, for that enables you to criticize your own failures and successes. You have to accustom yourself to practical study at home, you have to devote time to studies, to the history of chess, the development of chess theory, of chess culture.

He then describes the intensive work that he did through the years in order to perfect his game. He studied the games of the grandmasters, annotated them, worked on the openings. To prepare for tournaments he even went so far as to play practice games in a smoke-filled room to accustom himself to the air in tournaments. Even the physical side of the game was not ignored: he stressed the need to be in the best of health and recommended a long vacation of 15 to 20 days before an important event.

Botvinnik's style is hard to grasp at first sight. But a closer study reveals a very consistent thread—he always seeks out the most complicated positions. If a move leads to a good fight he is for it. For this reason he sticks to certain openings which he knows to perfection. A curious feature of his style is that he often plays better with Black than with White; this is because he avoids easy drawing lines with Black and accepts involved defensive positions which other masters sidestep.

It was in a simultaneous exhibition against Capablanca that Botvinnik first came to public attention. Thirteen years later he scored an historic tournament victory against Capa which ranks among the greatest masterpieces of the game.

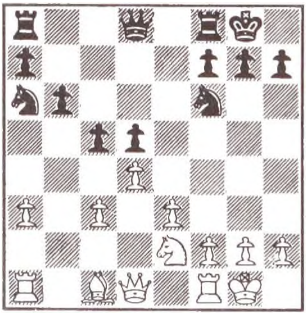
BOTVINNIK **CAPABLANCA**

AVRO Tournament
Holland, 1938
Nimzo-Indian Defense

1	**P–Q4**	**N–KB3**
2	**P–QB4**	**P–K3**
3	**N–QB3**	**B–N5**
4	**P–K3**	**P–Q4**
5	**P–QR3!**	

An original idea, virtually unknown at that time, though it has since been analyzed a good deal. Botvinnik has a way, as here, of introducing new ideas and then discarding the variations when the novelty has worn off. He relies on the element of surprise much more than any of his rivals.

5	. . .	**BxNch**
6	**PxB**	**P–B4**
7	**BPxP**	**KPxP**
8	**B–Q3**	**O–O**
9	**N–K2**	**P–QN3**
10	**O–O**	**B–R3**
11	**BxB**	**NxB**



What has White to show for his initiative? At first glance his position seems strategically bad, but he has a profound sacrificial theme in mind.

12 **B–N2**

The alternative *12* Q–Q3 is more accurate; however, Botvinnik is preparing a combination with the text.

12	. . .	**Q–Q2**
13	**P–QR4**	

To stop . . . Q–R5 after White's Queen moves.

13 . . . **KR–K1**

Positionally inaccurate. Botvinnik recommends instead *13* . . . PxP *14* BPxP KR–B1.

14 **Q–Q3** **P–B5**

Capa accepts the challenge because he wishes to be admired for his courage.

15	**Q–B2**	**N–N1**
16	**QR–K1!**	

Now the groundwork for the ensuing battle is laid: White sacrifices the QRP and allows Black to advance on the Q-side, while he plans to break through in the center.

16 . . . **N–B3**

Missing a tactical opportunity: with *16* . . . N–R4 *17* B–B1 P–

B4! he can offer much stronger resistance.

17 N–N3 N–QR4

Here again *17* . . . N–K5, and if *18* N–R1 P–B4 *19* P–B3 N–Q3 was better.

18 P–B3 N–N6
19 P–K4 QxP
20 P–K5 N–Q2
21 Q–B2 P–N3
22 P–B4 P–B4

Forced.

23 PxP e.p. NxBP
24 P–B5

Capa has an extra pawn, but the big question now is, can he hold off the attack?

24 . . . RxR
25 RxR R–K1

To force more exchanges. On *25* . . . R–KB1 *26* Q–B4! leads to a win; e.g., *26* . . . Q–R7 *27* PxP!! QxB *28* P–N7! KxP *29* N–B5ch K–R1 *30* Q–R6!, R–B2 *31* QxNch! and mates.

26 R–K6!! RxR
27 PxR K–N2

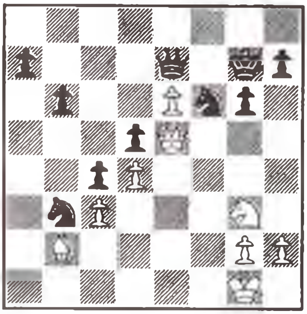
Actually it looks as though Black has weathered the worst, but there is much more to come!

28 Q–B4!

Threatening N–B5ch followed by Q–N5ch. Black does not have time to go after White's Bishop, for if *28* . . . Q–R7? *29* N–B5ch PxN *30* Q–N5ch K–B1 *31* QxNch and mates in two moves.

28 . . . Q–K1
29 Q–K5 Q–K2

Allows a profound combination, but there was no alternative: if *29* . . . N–R4 *30* B–B1! N–B3 *31* B–R6ch! KxB *32* QxN N–K2 *33* P–R4! P–R4 *34* N–R5!! wins.



30 B–R3!! QxB
31 N–R5ch!! PxN

Forced—if *31* . . . K–R3 *32* NxN wins, since Black has no perpetual check.

32 Q–N5ch K–B1
33 QxNch K–N1
34 P–K7!

The Queen must remain at KB6 to avoid perpetual check. If first *34* Q–B7ch K–R1 *35* P–K7 Q–B8ch *36* K–B2 Q–Q7ch *37* K–N3 QxPch *38* K–R4 QxPch is sufficient for a draw.

34 . . . Q–B8ch
35 K–B2 Q–B7ch
36 K–N3 Q–Q6ch
37 K–R4 Q–K5ch
38 KxP Q–K7ch
39 K–R4 Q–K5ch
40 P–N4 Q–K8ch
41 K–R5 Resigns

The manner in which Botvinnik has so often managed to annihilate Keres is one of the mysteries of chess history. Here is one of his more devastating victories.

Political Rumbly '90

KERES BOTVINNIK

U.S.S.R. Absolute Championship, 1941

Nimzo-Indian Defense

1 P–Q4	N–KB3
2 P–QB4	P–K3
3 N–QB3	B–N5
4 Q–B2	P–Q4
5 PxP	PxP

The alternative 5 . . . QxP is theoretically stronger, but Botvinnik has something new in mind.

6 B–N5

A two-edged move. With 6 P–QR3 White gets a solid, though minimal advantage. No doubt Botvinnik was playing psychologically, since he knows that Keres likes to complicate matters.

6 . . .	P–KR3
7 B–R4	P–B4!

New at the time, that is, new to Keres—not to Botvinnik. . . .

8 O–O–O?

An overanxious move which meets with a drastic refutation. The simple 8 P–K3 may be best, but 8 PxP is an excellent alternative, for if then 8 . . . P–KN4 9 B–N3 N–K5 10 P–K3 with good chances.

8 . . .	BxN!

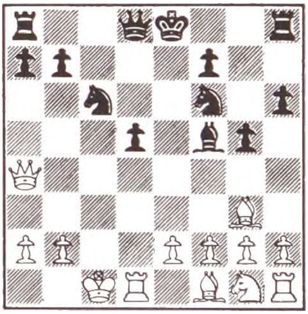
In his game against Mikenas in the 1940 U.S.S.R. Championship, Botvinnik played 8 . . . O–O? and came out badly after 9 PxP BxN 10 QxB. This innovation must have come as a surprise to Keres.

9 QxB

If first 9 BxN BxPch.

9 . . .	P–KN4
10 B–N3	PxP!
11 QxP	N–B3
12 Q–QR4	B–B4

Black now has a formidable attack against the enemy King.



13 P–K3

Loses quickly, but there was nothing really good.

13 . . .	R–QB1
14 B–Q3	Q–Q2

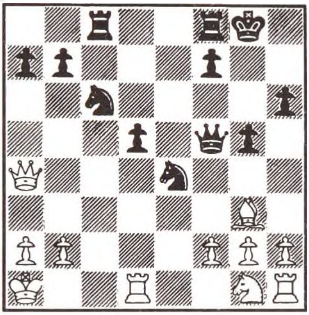
Releases the Knight—and wins.

15 K–N1	BxBch
16 RxB	Q–B4
17 P–K4	

Desperation—if *17* Q–B2 N–N5.

17 . . . NxP
18 K–R1 O–O
19 R–Q1

Or *19* Q–Q1 N–N5.



19 . . . P–N4!
20 QxNP N–Q5!
21 Q–Q3 N–B7ch
22 K–N1 N–N5
Resigns

Nothing can be done against the discovered/double check threats.

* Botvinnik has a number of pet variations which he handles with amazing skill. Here is a game which illustrates beautifully his mastery of the French Defense.

TOLUSH BOTVINNIK

U.S.S.R. Championship
1945
French Defense

1 P–K4 P–K3
2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 N–QB3 B–N5

His preferred variation.

4 P–K5 P–QB4
5 P–QR3 BxNch
6 PxB N–K2
7 N–B3 Q–R4

Botvinnik's continuation. His main idea is to play against the weak White Q-side pawns, taking his chances on the K-side attack.

8 B–Q2 P–B5!
9 P–QR4!?

A challenge which is accepted. *9* B–K2 is safer, though Black then gets his Queen to R5 and blocks White's Bishop.

9 . . . N–Q2!!

Announcing that he is willing to go after the QRP immediately! It takes a Botvinnik to get away with such a daring idea.

10 B–K2

But this is too tame. Since he is going to lose a pawn anyhow, he should play for the attack. Two interesting possibilities are *10* P–N3 and *10* N–N5!.

10 . . . N–QN3!
11 O–O NxP!

Only two pieces developed—and he goes pawn hunting!

12 N–R4 N–KN3!
13 NxN RPxN

In spite of his lack of development Black already has a won game.

test on JCC

14 R–K1 **B–Q2**
15 B–KB1

White is at a loss for good ideas . . . and the annotator is also.

15 . . . **P–QN4**
16 Q–B3

Beginning the long-winded maneuver to free the Bishop.

16 . . . **R–QN1**
17 KR–N1 **Q–B2**
18 B–B1 **P–R4!**

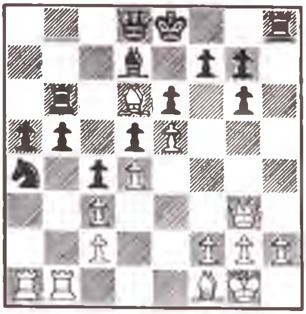
Botvinnik, with profound insight, sees that castling would be a serious mistake—the Rook is much more effective on the Rook file.

19 B–R3 **R–N3!**

Preparing a sacrifice.

20 Q–N3 **Q–Q1**
21 B–Q6?

Underestimating the force of the sacrifice. The best try was passive play with 21 P–R3.



21 . . . **RxB!!**

The most remarkable feature of this combination is that its purpose is purely positional—to liberate Black's game.

22 PxR **B–B3!**
23 P–R3 **K–Q2!**
24 R–K1 **Q–R5!**
25 Q–K5 **Q–B3**
26 Q–N3 **R–R5!**

To force the exchange of Queens.

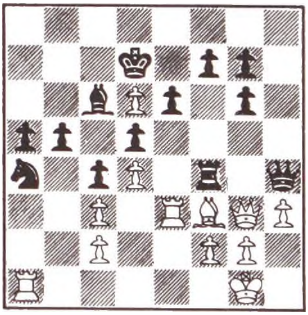
27 R–K3

To reply to 27 . . . Q–B5? with R–B3.

27 . . . **R–B5**
28 B–K2 **Q–R5**

At last possible.

29 B–B3



It is not readily apparent what Black has accomplished: if the Queens are exchanged his Rook will be forced back unfavorably.

29 . . . **P–N5!**

Suddenly this breakthrough turns out to be decisive.

30 QxQ RxQ
31 P–N3

He has a chance to rid himself of the NP by *31* PxP PxP *32* R–N1, but after *32* . . . RxQP Black's Rook enters too strongly.

31 . . . R–R1
32 PxP PxP
33 R–N1 R–QN1
34 P–R4 R–N2
35 K–R2 KxP
36 P–N4 N–B6

Now we see what Black has accomplished. He has two pawns for the exchange, and the Q-side pawns may be expected to triumph.

37 R–QR1 N–N4!
38 R–Q1 R–R2

After Black's Rook gets to the seventh rank it is all over.

39 P–R5 P–N4
40 K–N2 R–R7
41 B–K2 and resigns

A magnificent game, remarkable for its profound long-range positional combinations.

In his return match with Tal in 1961, when he was almost fifty years old, Botvinnik rose to great heights to snatch the crown back from his gifted rival. Here is the best game, one which combines deep strategic ideas, tactical skill, and psychological acumen.

BOTVINNIK TAL

7th Match Game, 1961

Nimzo-Indian Defense

1 P–QB4 N–KB3
2 N–QB3 P–K3
3 P–Q4 B–N5

The Nimzo-Indian, played innumerable times between these two opponents.

4 P–QR3

Botvinnik's favorite move.

4 . . . BxNch
5 PxB P–QN3

To free himself early. This line, known as the Samisch variation, is best met by fixing the White pawns and then counterattacking at the appropriate moment. One of the best strategic plans for Black was seen in Botvinnik–Reshevsky, World Championship Tournament 1948, which continued: 5 . . . P–B4 6 P–K3 N–B3 (by transposition) 7 B–Q3 O–O 8 N–K2 P–QN3 9 P–K4 N–K1 *10* B–K3 P–Q3 *11* O–O N–R4 and Black eventually won a hard-fought game. Improvements for White have been suggested, but the Black strategy is still hard to meet.

6 P–B3 B–R3
7 P–K4 P–Q4

The intended coup which frees his game.

8 BPxP

Obviously bad for White is *8* P–K5? N–N1! *9* PxP BxB *10* KxB PxP *11* P–KB4 N–K2, with command of the White squares and an excellent game.

8 . . . **BxB**
9 **KxB** **PxP**
10 **B–N5!!**

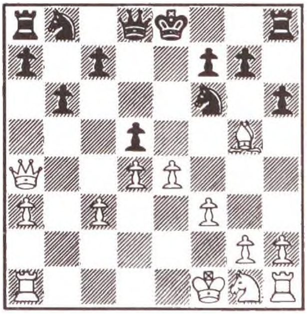
A profound plan, typical of Botvinnik at his best.

10 . . . **P–KR3**

More or less forced, since P–K5 is threatened. If *10* PxP, then simply *11* PxP.

With the text Tal as usual is prepared to sacrifice: if *11* BxN QxB *12* PxP O–O with strong play for the pawn.

11 **Q–R4ch!**



Relying mainly on his opponent's dislike of simplification. Tal is once said to have remarked that he played psychological chess, but here his weakness is all too apparent and exploited.

11 . . . **P–B3?**

No doubt the reply Botvinnik had hoped for. Correct is *11* . . . Q–Q2 *12* QxQch (there is no alternative) QNxQ, and if *13* B–R4 PxP *14* R–K1 (not *14* PxP NxP *15* R–K1 P–KB4) O–O *15* PxP QR–K1 and Black has the better of it because of White's weak pawns.

12 **B–R4**

Now he can afford to sacrifice a pawn.

12 . . . **PxP**
13 **R–K1** **P–KN4**

Now Tal suddenly finds his position uncomfortable. On the more natural *13* . . . O–O *14* PxP Q–B2 (to relieve the pin) *15* N–B3 (of course not *15* BxN? Q–B5ch), and White retains a strong initiative.

14 **B–B2** **Q–K2**
15 **N–K2**

15 PxP looks tempting in order to continue after *15* . . . NxP with *16* P–Q5, except for the inconvenient *16* . . . N–Q7 mate. So White must play *16* N–B3, when Black can consolidate with *16* . . . O–O.

15 . . . **P–N4**

This move has been criticized unjustly, since Black is already in a dilemma. If he castles K-side, N–N3 regains the pawn, and the KR-file will soon be opened with P–KR4. He cannot plan to castle Q-side until the White Queen is out of the way. So Tal's defense is a natural one.

16 Q–B2 QxP!?

Typically Tal: with half of his pieces undeveloped he goes pawn hunting. But his intention is rather to maintain the complications.

17 P–R4 NPxP?

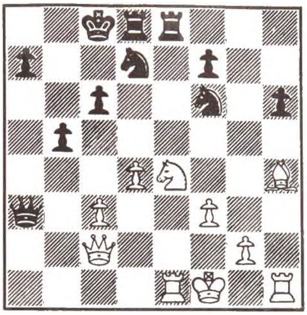
But this leaves him too exposed. A better try was *17 . . .* P–N5 *18* N–N3 QN–Q2 *19* PxKP O–O–O *20* B–K3 Q–R5! with counterchances.

18 BxP QN–Q2
19 N–N3 O–O–O
20 NxP!

For if *20 . . .* NxN *21* QxN, threatening both BxR and Qx BPch.

20 . . . KR–K1!

Tal has correctly calculated that with this move he can hold the position, for if *21* BxN NxB *22* NxN RxRch *23* KxR Q–R8ch *24* Q–Q1 QxPch *25* Q–Q2 forces the draw, but there is no win for White; whereas if *21* NxN Rx Rch 22 KxR Q–R8ch 23 Q–Q1 QxPch 24 K–B2 Q–N7ch 25 K–B1 N–K4 with a strong attack.



21 K–B2!

With this powerful move he avoids all the complications and steers into an easily won endgame.

21 . . . NxNch

Forced, since White was threatening to win a piece.

22 PxN P–B3

Again forced to avoid the loss of the exchange.

23 R–R1 Q–K2
24 RxP QxP

Loses neatly, but there was nothing better.

25 QxQ RxQ
26 R–R8ch N–N1

If *26 . . .* K–B2 27 B–N3ch and the Rook goes.

27 B–N3 K–N2
28 R(R1)–R1 R–QB1

Black is choking. If *28 . . .* P–QB4 29 R(R1)–R7ch is decisive, for if *29 . . .* K–N3 30 B–B7ch.

29 R(R8)–R7ch K–N3
30 BxN

For if he now recaptures 30 . . . RxB 31 R(R1)–R6 mate.

30 . . . P–N5

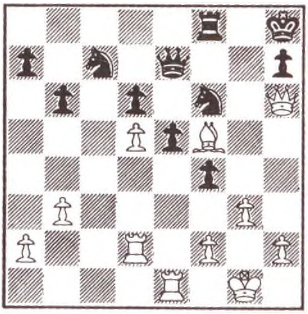
Desperation. The finish is still artistic.

31 B–Q6 PxP
32 B–B5ch K–N4
33 R(R1)–R4 Resigns

One move before mate, which even problem moves can no longer stop.

Here are some more gems from the Botvinnik storehouse.

Grigoriev

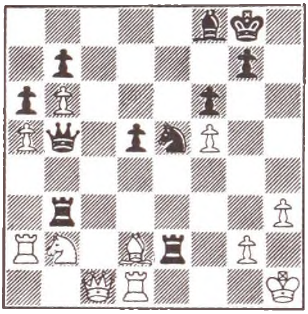


Botvinnik—TO PLAY

Match: Leningrad–Moscow 1927

1 RxP! PxR
2 P–Q6 Q–Q1
3 PxN QxR
4 QxRch N–N1
5 P–B8=Q Resigns

Botvinnik—TO PLAY



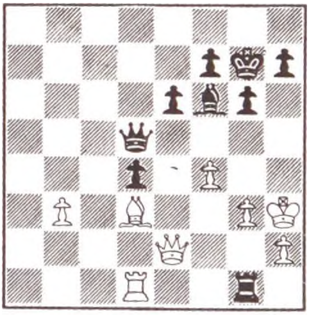
Stolberg

U.S.S.R. Championship 1940

1 . . . RxPch!!
2 PxR P–Q5!
Resigns

For he cannot stop Q–Q4ch.

Botvinnik—TO PLAY

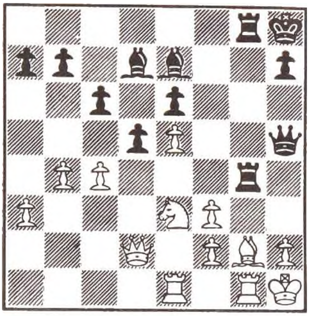


Lilienthal

Leningrad–Moscow, 1941

1 . . . R–N7!
2 Q–K4 RxKRPch
3 KxR Q–R4ch
4 K–N2 QxR, winning another pawn and the game.

Botvinnik—TO PLAY



H. Steiner

Groningen, 1946

1	. . .	R–R5
2	N–B1	B–N4
	Resigns	

For B–B5 cannot be prevented.

David Bronstein

The first of the younger Soviet masters to challenge Botvinnik was David Bronstein, whose career is in many respects typical. Born in Belaya Tserkov in 1924, he first attracted attention in 1944 when he beat Botvinnik in the Soviet championship. For the next six years his rise was meteoric: Moscow City Championship 1946, Interzonal 1948, tie for first in U.S.S.R. Championship in 1949 and 1950, finally first in challengers' tournament 1950, and a tie match with Botvinnik for the world title in 1951.

Thereafter his results slid rapidly downhill. Though always a strong master, he has never succeeded in duplicating any of the feats of his early years. In the official FIDE ranking of 1973 he was only tied for twenty-third.

His style is typical of the bold tactics of the earlier Soviet masters, with the exception of Botvinnik. There is one especially original twist—his attacks come right out of the openings, where he has been outdistanced only by Tal. Here is one of his most brilliant efforts from recent years, one of the most enchanting games in this collection. ✓

BRONSTEIN LJUBOJEVIC

Petropolis, 1973

Alekhine's Defense

1	P–K4	N–KB3

Deviating from his usual Sicilian because he had a prepared variation in mind. But he is surprised by Bronstein's reply.

2	P–K5	N–Q4
3	P–Q4	P–Q3
4	P–QB4	

More usual nowadays are the quieter lines 4 B–B4 and 4 N–KB3. Bronstein heads for an all-out attack, regardless of previous theory.

4 . . . **N–N3**
5 **P–B4!**

Generally considered too risky, and so 5 PxP is seen more often, though without much danger to Black.

5 . . . **PxP**
6 **BPxP** **P–QB4!?**

An enterprising move, with which the Yugoslavian master had had some success. More solid is 6 . . . N–B3, and if 7 N–KB3 B–N5, with a good game. 6 . . . B–B4 is also strong.

7 **P–Q5** **P–K3**

Conjuring up threats with . . . Q–R5ch. His game already looks rather weak.

8 **N–QB3!**

For if *8* . . . NxP 9 Q–R4ch, and if *8* . . . Q–R5ch 9 P–N3 Q–Q5, either *10* Q–K2 or *10* B–B4 is strong for White.

8 . . . **PxP**
9 **PxP** **P–B5**

The best try. If instead 9 . . . Q–R5ch *10* P–N3 Q–Q5 *11* B–N5ch B–Q2 *12* Q–K2 NxP *13* P–K6! gives White a strong attack, as in Balashov–Grigorian, Riga 1967.

10 **N–B3**

The natural developmental sequence. White could not play the immediate *10* BxP? because of *10* . . . Q–R5ch, but now the pawn capture is threatened.

10 . . . **B–KN5**

On the alternative *10* . . . B–QN5 White comes out ahead after *11* BxP NxB *12* Q–R4ch N–B3 *13* PxN.

Black is now hoping for *11* BxP NxB *12* Q–R4ch N–Q2 *13* QxN BxN *14* PxB NxKP *15* Q–K2 Q–K2, with satisfactory position.

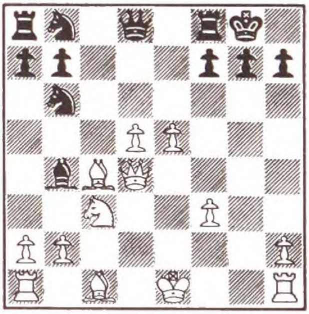
11 **Q–Q4!**

Naturally Bronstein chooses the more aggressive line.

11 . . . **BxN**
12 **PxB** **B–N5**

Quick development for an attack. The threat is now against the White QP.

13 **BxP** **O–O**



White has won a pawn, but the center pawns are weak and exposed, and his King is not yet in a safe position. Bronstein comes up with a magnificent combination.

14 **R–KN1** **P–N3**

Necessary, for if *14* . . . N–B3? *15* Q–N4 wins.

Two years earlier Ljubojevic had played the White pieces with this variation against Honfi at Cacak 1971. There Black replied *14* . . . Q–B2? and was quickly mated after *15* P–K6 P–B3 *16* B–KR6 QxB *17* RxPch K–R1 *18* R–N8ch!!, for if *18* . . . KxR *19* Q–N1ch and *20* Q–N7 mate.

Black probably now anticipated *15* B–N3 N–B3 *16* Q–K4 BxNch *17* PxB NxKP, with a good counterattack.

15 **B–KN5!**

First surprise.

15 . . . **Q–B2**
16 **B–N3!!!?**

Sacrificing a full Rook, without an immediate follow-up. Subsequent analysis has cast some doubt on the soundness of the sacrifice, but in over-the-board play it remains a marvelous conception.

16 . . . **B–B4**

He has to go after the Rook, since his own Bishop is threatened. *16* . . . R–K1? *17* QxB QxPch *18* K–B2 leads to nothing.

17 **Q–KB4** **BxR**

Actually there does not seem to be any immediate threat, since *18* B–B6 is adequately met by *18* . . . QN–Q2, for if *19* Q–R6? NxB *20* PxN Q–K4ch and wins.

18 **P–Q6**

To open up the diagonal for the King's Bishop.

18 . . . **Q–B1**

If immediately *18* . . . Q–B4 *19* P–K6 QN–Q2 (forced) *20* PxPch K–N2 *21* B–R6ch K–R1 *22* O–O–O, with variations similar to the notes to White's next move.

19 **K–K2?**

A fancy move which jeopardizes his chances needlessly. Correct was *19* O–O–O, when the best reply would have been *19* . . . Q–QB4 *20* P–K6 Q–K6ch *21* QxQ BxQch 22 BxB PxP 23 BxPch and White should win the endgame, though Black has a lot of play left.

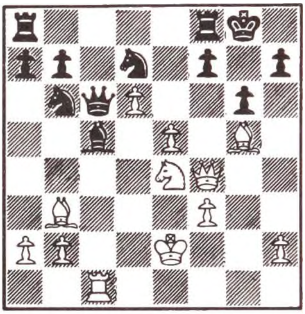
19 . . . **B–B4?**

Natural enough, but he misses a good way out. Correct now was *19* . . . Q–QB4 with the threat of . . . Q–B7ch. If then *20* P–K6 QN–Q2 *21* PxPch K–N2 22 B–R6ch K–R1 Black already has many counterthreats, and White's King is almost as exposed as Black's. With *19* . . . Q–QB4 he might even have won; after the text he is definitely lost. However it must have been hard to see how White was going to win now, without any direct mating continuations available and with a whole Rook down.

20 N–K4 QN–Q2
21 R–QB1!

A surprisingly powerful quiet move. He plans to divert the Black pieces from KB6.

21 . . . Q–B3



22 RxB!!

The amazing denouement now unfolds.

22 . . . NxR
23 N–B6ch K–R1

No better is 23 . . . K–N2 24 Q–R4.

24 Q–R4

Now Black can only avoid mate by wholesale abandonment of his pieces. He still has a few spite checks.

24 . . . Q–N4ch
25 K–K3! P–KR4

After 25 . . . Q–Q6ch 26 K–B2 there are no more checks.

26 NxP QxBch

Desperation. If instead 26 . . . Q–Q6ch 27 K–B2 PxN 28 B–B6ch mates in a few. And if 26 . . . N–Q4ch 27 BxN.

27 PxQ N–Q4ch
28 K–Q4!

Bronstein continues aggressively. His opponent had been hoping for 28 K–B2 PxN 29 QxPch K–N1 30 B–B6 NxB 31 PxN N–K3 and Black gets out.

28 . . . N–K3ch
29 KxN NxB
30 N–B6
dis ch K–N2
31 QxN

With Queen and Knight for the two Rooks and Black still in a mating net, the rest is simple.

31 . . . KR–B1
32 P–K6! PxPch
33 KxP

A most enterprising King!

33 . . . R–B1
34 P–Q7 P–R4
35 N–N4 R–R3ch

The first move in the game for this Rook.

36 K–K5 R–B4ch
37 QxR PxQ
38 P–Q8=Q PxN
39 Q–Q7ch K–R3
40 QxQNP R–KN3
41 P–B4 Resigns

The following game almost won him the world's championship.

BOTVINNIK **BRONSTEIN**

17th Match Game
Moscow, 1951
Nimzo-Indian Defense

1 **P–Q4** **N–KB3**
2 **P–QB4** **P–K3**
3 **N–QB3** **B–N5**
4 **P–K3**

Currently in vogue.

4 . . . **P–QN3**

A standard reply.

5 **N–K2** **B–R3!**

A new and vital idea which takes all the sting out of White's opening setup.

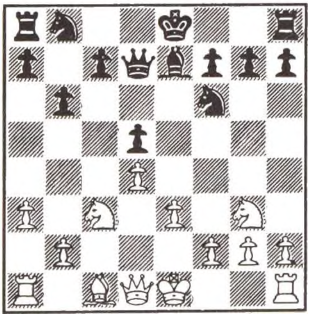
6 **P–QR3** **B–K2!**
7 **N–N3** **P–Q4!**

The point; Black already has the initiative.

8 **PxP**

This exchange leads to nothing. Yet after *8* P–N3 P–B4 Black also has the better of it.

8 . . . **BxB**
9 **NxB** **PxP**
10 **N–N3** **Q–Q2**



White's Bishop is hemmed in; in such positions he has the worst of it. It is astounding to note how completely Botvinnik has been outplayed.

11 **Q–B3**

Intending both N–B5 and P–K4 when opportune.

11 . . . **N–B3**

If *11* . . . P–KN3 *12* P–K4 is strong.

12 **O–O**

He cannot continue as he wishes. On *12* P–K4 NxQP is devastating, while *12* N–B5 B–B1! is followed by . . . P–KN3. However, had he realized the seriousness of his situation he might have played for the draw here with *12* N–B5 B–B1 *13* N–N3!.

12 . . . **P–KN3**
13 **B–Q2** **O–O**
14 **N(B3)–K2**

Hereabouts Botvinnik operates with no definite plan. A good try was P–QN4 followed by QR–B1 and pressure on the QB-file.

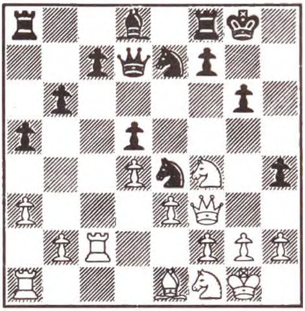
14 . . . **P–KR4!**

Meanwhile Bronstein knows exactly what he wants and goes after it.

15 **KR–QB1** **P–R5**
16 **N–B1** **N–K5**
17 **N–B4** **P–QR4!**
18 **R–B2** **B–Q1!**

White's attack against the QBP has been effectively stopped.

19	B–K1	N–K2



20 Q–K2?

After inaccurate maneuvering he makes a serious mistake from which he never recovers. The best chance was 20 N–Q2, to force the exchange of Black's Knight. After the text his position goes from worse to worser.

20	. . .	N–Q3
21	P–B3	P–KN4
22	N–Q3	Q–K3
23	P–R4	N–N3
24	P–R3	P–KB4
25	B–B3	B–B3
26	R–K1	R(R1)–K1
27	Q–Q1	

White can do little more than mark time.

27	. . .	R–B2
28	P–QN3	R(B2)–K2
29	B–N2	P–B5!

A beautiful conception. If in reply 30 PxP QxR!! 31 NxQ RxN 32 Q–Q2 NxP, with too many threats all over the board.

30	N–K5	BxN
31	PxB	N–B2
32	PxP	NxBP
33	N–R2	P–B4!

Decisive: the Bishop is blocked out of the game.

34 N–N4

If at once 34 B–B1 NxKP! wins.

34	. . .	P–Q5
35	N–B6ch??	

The fatal blunder. Although he should probably lose in the long run, there was some hope in 35 B–B1.

35	. . .	QxN!!
	Resigns	

For if 36 PxQ RxRch.

Even against a great theoretician like Levenfish, Bronstein can display superior opening knowledge. And with what effect!

BRONSTEIN LEVENFISH

U.S.S.R. Championship, 1947

Queen's Gambit Declined

1	P–Q4	P–Q4
2	N–KB3	N–KB3
3	P–B4	P–B3
4	P–K3	P–K3
5	B–Q3	PxP
6	BxBP	QN–Q2
7	N–B3	P–QN4
8	B–Q3	P–QR3
9	P–K4	P–B4
10	P–K5	PxP

So far all according to Fine, but here White springs a new one.

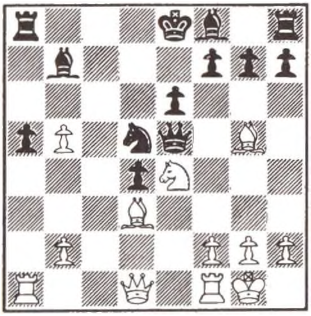
11 N–K4

The main idea is if *11* . . . NxN *12* BxN R–QN1 *13* QxP B–B4 *14* Q–Q2, but Black need not fear this variation.

11 . . . N–Q4
12 O–O B–N2?

Bronstein has taken his eminent opponent by surprise. The text is a mistake; instead *12* . . . B–K2 was correct and good enough for equality.

13 B–N5 Q–N1
14 P–QR4! NxP
15 NxN QxN
16 PxP P–QR4



17 P–B4!

Initiating a devastating attack.

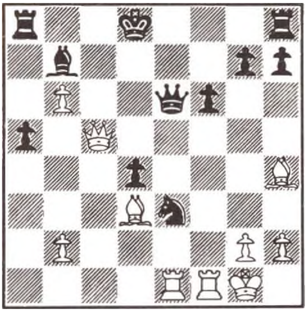
17 . . . Q–N1
18 P–B5 Q–K4
19 P–N6!

Threatening Q–R4ch.

19 . . . B–Q3
20 NxBch QxN
21 PxP P–B3

Desperate already. On *21* . . . QxKP White has his choice of winning procedures, of which perhaps the simplest is 22 R–K1; e.g., 22 . . . N–K6 23 B–N5ch K–B1 24 QxP Q–Q4 25 QxQ NxQ 26 RxP!.

22 Q–R5ch K–Q1
23 B–R4 QxKP
24 QR–K1 N–K6
25 Q–QB5



This just about finishes Black off; the remainder is "kid stuff."

25 . . . Q–Q4
26 Q–B7ch K–K1
27 QxP! R–KB1

Avoiding a pretty variation. If 27 . . . R–KN1 28 B–N5ch!!.

28 B–N5ch!

Anyhow!

28 . . . B–B3
29 BxBch QxB
30 BxP R–B2
31 Q–N8ch R–B1

32 Q–N5 K–Q2
33 R–B2

An inaccuracy; 33 Q–N7ch wins more quickly.

33 . . . QxP
34 Q–N7ch K–B3
35 BxP

Now the Knight goes.

35 . . . RxR
36 BxN!

Not 36 BxQ RxPch!.

36 . . . QxP
37 R–B1ch K–N4
38 Q–N7ch K–R5
39 R–B4ch K–R6
40 B–B1 Resigns

Vassily Smyslov

Vassily Smyslov, the first new Soviet world champion after Botvinnik, was born in 1921, the son of an engineer who had personally known Tchigorin, the leading light of chess in 19th-century Soviet Russia.

His first success came in the Moscow championship of 1938, when he tied for first with Lilienthal. Two years later in the Soviet championship he finished third, ahead of both Botvinnik and Keres. The next year he finished third in the Absolute Championship, thereby achieving recognition as the Soviet Union's greatest master after Botvinnik and Keres.

For the next seventeen years, until his loss in 1958, he was ranked among the three or four best in the world. At Groningen in 1946, the first big postwar international tournament, he was third, behind Botvinnik and Euwe. Then in the world championship tournament of 1948 he was second to Botvinnik. The stage was set for a match between these two great players, but the Soviets preferred to wait for the official course of events. In 1951 he was outdistanced by the apparently invincible Bronstein, forcing him to wait another three years for his big chance.

Finally in 1953 he did win the Candidates' Tournament, entitling him to play Botvinnik for the world title. Though the match ended in a draw, thereby enabling Botvinnik to remain champion, as he had done with Bronstein, it showed the enormous promise of the younger master. Three years later, after another first in the Candidates' Tournament, he again faced Botvinnik for the title. This time Smyslov won, thereby becoming the first Soviet-born master to be world champion.

But in the return match the next year Botvinnik defeated him in a magnificent comeback, reminiscent of Lasker's victory at New York in 1924 and Capablanca's at Moscow and Nottingham in 1936.

Perhaps crushed by this loss, Smyslov never returned to his old top form. He could never again reach victory in the Candidates' Tournaments. And in other contests he was often sloppy, at times finishing in the middle or even lower against rather mediocre opposition. Although he always retained enough technique to maintain a high average score, ranking eleventh in the world in 1973, new names, Petrosian, Spassky, Fischer, Karpov, Larsen, began to pre-empt public attention.

In addition to chess, Smyslov is said to have a first-rate voice, and had he not made chess his career, he would have tried to become a concert singer. He has also written a fair amount, more so than most of his colleagues.

In his autobiography, published when he was world champion in 1957, he has this to say about himself:

> I first became interested in chess as early as 1927 when still a child. My father, Vassily Osipovich Smyslov, was my first teacher. I still have A. A. Alekhine's book *My Best Games*, which my father gave to me in 1928 and which became my constant reference.
>
> My love for the literature of the game began as soon as I had learnt how to play. I was later to read everything that my father had in his library: Dufresne's handbook, separate numbers of the Soviet magazines *Chess* and *Chess Sheet*, the textbooks of Lasker and Capablanca, and the collections of games of Soviet and international tournaments. The games of the great Russian chess master M. I. Tchigorin made an indelible impression on me; it was with interest that I read the various declarations on strategy by A. I. Nimzovich; I studied attentively the genius of prominent Soviet masters.
>
> During my years as a student my enthusiasm for chess began to take on a serious and systematic character. The conditions created in our country for the training and development of a man's talent in the field of culture chosen by him were favorable for me to mature in.
>
> In chess I saw an interesting sphere of creative ideas built up on the opposing thoughts of two chess players, who in the process of a tense struggle are striving to create an artistic composition. I always considered the only fruitful approach to chess, as one of the manifestations of the exalted culture of the people, the creative one.

From here on Smyslov engages in a propagandistic tirade about how Soviet supremacy at chess proves the superiority of the Soviet system. This curious propaganda line deserves some comment.

It was understandable that the Soviets would try to make propaganda capital out of their superiority at chess, but some of the lines adopted have been unexpected, at times almost ludicrous. Botvinnik had already written some rather silly articles on the "Soviet school of chess," neglecting to mention that his style was quite different from that of the others, which accounted in good part for his success. Later this was expanded and published in different forms by many authors, most clearly in the book by Kotov and Yudovich, *The Soviet School of Chess*. Much is made of Tchigorin, who in his day was clearly inferior to Steinitz, and whose main success was a drawn match with Tarrasch. Further, Tchigorin did not understand the superiority of the Bishops in open positions, emphasizing instead the superiority of the Knights; it remained for Steinitz and his followers to clarify this point.

Then most surprisingly the Soviets have consistently referred to Alekhine as "Russia's greatest player." In this they have completely ignored his Tsarist background, as well as his sharp anti-Soviet attitude throughout his life. Besides, if Alekhine is really Russia's greatest master, that would logically prove the superiority of the Tsarist system, not the Soviet. Nor is there any particular reason why Alekhine should be considered greater than Botvinnik.

The effect of the constant propaganda line on the Soviet grandmasters and masters is hard to evaluate. Officially the Soviets deny that their players are professionals; yet, in practice they are all heavily subsidized, doing nothing else for a living. The purpose of this denial of professionalism is also rather hard to grasp. But the fact is that apart from Botvinnik, all the leading Soviet masters have been full-fledged professionals, devoting their entire lives to the game.

In any case the reader can ignore the propaganda line and enjoy the great chess that the Soviet masters have produced.

Smyslov's style is typical of the eclecticism and striving for complications so often seen in the Soviet players. Here is an outstanding game.

SMYSLOV KOTOV

Moscow, 1943

Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 N–QB3

Usually considered inferior, but Smyslov has made this his pet variation and does quite well with it.

2 . . . N–QB3
3 P–KN3 P–KN3
4 B–N2 B–N2
5 P–Q3 P–Q3

Here the old idea for White was to prepare a K-side attack by KN–K2, P–KB4, P–KR3, P–KN4, etc. Experience has shown that Black can then equalize with a Q-side advance. Smyslov introduces a new wrinkle.

6 N–B3! P–K3

The main idea of White's sixth move is to reply to . . . N–Q5 with QN–K2!, which mobilizes his forces more quickly than Black's.

7 B–N5 KN–K2
8 Q–Q2 P–KR3

Preferable to the risky . . . O–O. Kotov gradually drifts into a lost position, but how—nobody knows. That is the essence of Smyslov's artistry.

9 B–K3

To play P–Q4.

9 . . . P–K4
10 O–O B–K3
11 N–K1 Q–Q2

Perhaps to castle on the Q-side.

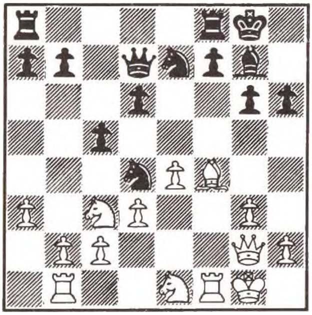
12 P–QR3!

So that if Black does castle long, he can react with the immediate P–QN4.

12 . . . B–R6

Better is . . . P–N3 and . . . P–Q4.

13 P–B4 N–Q5
14 R–N1 PxP
15 BxP BxB
16 QxB! O–O



Black has freed himself somewhat, but Smyslov now shows that he has exposed himself to a formidable attack.

17 P–KN4! QR–Q1
18 K–R1 N–K3
19 B–Q2 P–Q4

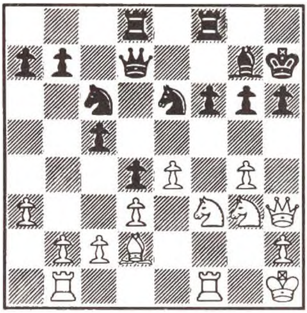
Normally this break equalizes for Black, but White manages to preserve the pressure.

20 N–B3 P–Q5

Consolidates too early; 20 . . . P–B4 was preferable.

21 N–K2 N–B3
22 Q–R3 K–R2
23 N–N3 P–B3

Kotov thinks he has solidified his position, but he is in for quite a surprise.



24 N–B5!! PxN
25 NPxP N–B2
26 R–N1

With various neat ideas, e.g., 27 RxBch!.

26 . . . N–K1
27 R–N6 R–B2
28 QR–N1

Smyslov's judgment is confirmed: the RP cannot be held, and the attack crashes through.

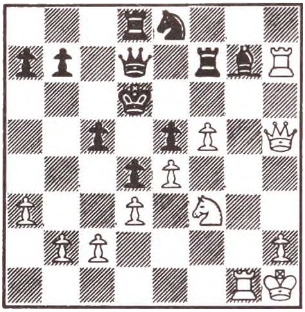
28 . . . K–N1
29 RxRP K–B1
30 R–R7

Threatening B–R6.

30 . . . K–K2
31 Q–R5!

No rest. Again B–R6 is threatened.

31 . . . K–Q3
32 B–B4ch N–K4
33 BxNch PxB



Again Black threatens to solidify with . . . N–B3.

34 P–B6!!

A beautiful thrust which keeps the attack alive.

34 . . . NxP
35 QxPch K–B3
36 R(R7)xB

The point. If 36 . . . RxR 37 QxNch.

36 . . . K–N4
37 NxPch!

No longer essential, but a few more sacrifices add to the charm of the game.

37 . . . K–N3
38 P–N4! R–QB1
39 RxR QxR
40 Q–Q6ch R–B3

Reluctant to resign.

41 NxR NxP
42 PxPch

And not 42 PxN?? Q–B6ch! with a perpetual.

42 . . . Resigns

In the chess of the future, book knowledge will be increasingly important. Today already great masters are helpless against elaborately prepared variations. Here is a famous game in which Reshevsky comes to grief.

SMYSLOV RESHEVSKY

Radio Match: U.S.S.R.–U.S.A., 1945

Ruy Lopez

1 P–K4 P–K4
2 N–KB3 N–QB3
3 B–N5 P–QR3
4 B–R4 N–B3
5 O–O NxP
6 P–Q4 P–QN4
7 B–N3 P–Q4
8 PxP B–K3
9 P–B3 B–QB4

The alternative . . . B–K2 is safer.

10 QN–Q2 O–O
11 B–B2 P–B4
12 N–N3 B–N3
13 KN–Q4 NxN
14 NxN BxN

All "book" in Reshevsky's mind, but he discovers that Smyslov has a later edition.

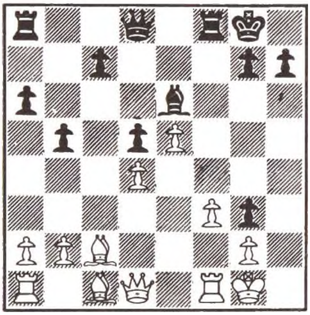
15 PxB P–B5
16 P–B3 N–N6

Still with a feeling of safety, because this had always been considered a sound sacrifice. On *16* . . . N–N4 *17* P–KR4 N–B2 *18* BxP QxP *19* Q–Q2 White has the better of it.

17 **PxN**

First surprise; Reshevsky thought that the piece was untakable.

17 . . . **PxP**



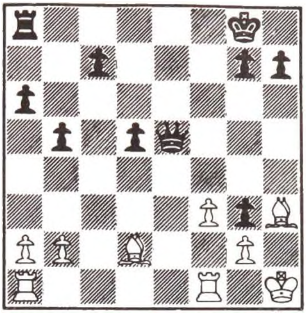
18 **Q–Q3!**

The decisive rebuttal, which had been extensively analyzed by the Soviet masters.

18 . . . **B–B4**

On the alternative *18* . . . Q–R5 *19* QxPch QxQ *20* BxQch QxB *21* B–N5 White wins the endgame.

19 **QxB** **RxQ**
20 **BxR** **Q–R5**
21 **B–R3** **QxPch**
22 **K–R1** **QxKP**
23 **B–Q2**



At this point the American team radioed for time consumed by the Soviets. Reshevsky, who had taken an hour and a half, discovered to his consternation that Smyslov had taken exactly one minute! Then he knew what he was up against. The whole variation had been published in the June 1945 issue of the official Soviet chess magazine!

23 . . . **QxP**

Reshevsky had to figure everything out over the board, and it is just too much for mortal man. A better move is *23* . . . P–B4, but even then, analysis has shown, *24* QR–K1! QxP *25* B–B4 should win for White.

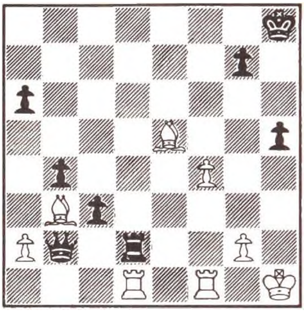
24 **B–B4** **P–B4**
25 **B–K6ch** **K–R1**
26 **BxQP**

After this the rest is comparatively simple.

26 . . . **R–Q1**
27 **QR–Q1** **P–B5**
28 **BxNP** **P–B6**
29 **B–K5** **P–N5**

The alternative 29 . . . Q–K7 is neatly refuted by 30 BxP!, for if 30 . . . RxB 31 QR–K1! and wins.

30 B–QN3 R–Q7
31 P–B4 P–KR4



32 R–QN1 R–KB7

A desperate stab. If 32 . . . Q–R6 33 QR–K1, and P–B5 decides.

33 KR–K1 Q–Q7
34 QR–Q1 Q–N7
35 R–Q8ch K–R2
36 B–N8ch K–N3
37 R–Q6ch K–B4
38 B–K6ch K–N3
39 B–Q5 dis ch K–R2
40 B–K4ch K–K1
41 B–N6! Resigns

Botvinnik was the great name to conjure with in the earlier years of Smyslov's career, and he did well against him. Between 1940 and 1957 these two masters played 68 tournament and match games, of which Smyslov won 13, lost 14, and drew 41, thus a virtually even result. Here is the sixth game of the 1957 match in which Smyslov won the title. Psychologically it must have been a bad blow to Botvinnik, who thereafter could succeed in winning only one more game.

SMYSLOV BOTVINNIK

6th Match Game, 1957

Gruenfeld Defense

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–KN3
3 N–QB3 P–Q4
4 N–B3 B–N2
5 Q–N3 PxP
6 QxBP O–O
7 P–K4 B–N5!

Not surprising per se but rather because it is the line introduced and popularized by Smyslov. The idea is to initiate an immediate attack on the White center. Theory has found no rejoinder which gives White a clear advantage.

8 B–K3 KN–Q2!
9 O–O–O

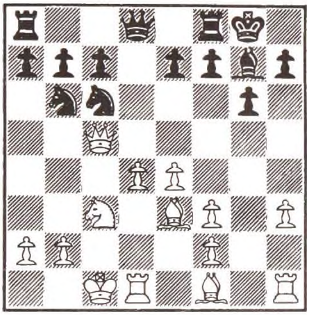
Attempting to improve on Euwe's play in the game Euwe–Smyslov, World Championship Tournament 1948, which continued 9 Q–N3 N–N3 10 P–QR4 P–QR4 11 P–Q5 BxN 12 PxB Q–Q3!, and Black eventually won a brilliant endgame.

9 . . . N–QB3

Smyslov recommends instead 9 . . . N–N3, and if then 10 Q–N3 P–QR4 11 P–QR4 N–B3 12 P–

Q5 N–N5, with adequate counterplay.

10 P–KR3 BxN
11 PxB N–N3
12 Q–B5



12 . . . P–B4

Botvinnik never liked cramped positions, so here too he strikes out right away. More cautious was *12* . . . P–K3.

13 N–K2

To prevent . . . P–B5. Smyslov recommends instead *13* P–Q5 N–K4 *14* B–K2, arguing that the White pawn center is threatening to become dangerous, but Black can reply *14* . . . P–B5 *15* B–Q2 Q–Q3 *16* Q–R5 P–QR3 and his Knight at K4 is powerfully entrenched.

13 . . . Q–Q3
14 P–K5

There is nothing better: if *14* B–B4 P–K4! with adequate counterplay.

14 . . . QxQ?

The decisive error. As Smyslov points out, *14* . . . Q–Q4! first was correct: if then *15* N–B3 QxQ *16* PxQ P–B5! is available, equalizing the chances after *17* PxN PxB *18* NPxBP BxP. And if *15* N–B4 (instead of *15* N–B3) QxRP.

15 PxQ N–B5
16 P–B4

After this consolidation White has a won game. The remainder is played in perfect style by Smyslov.

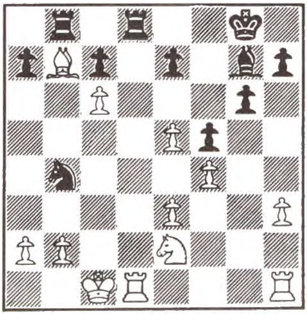
16 . . . KR–Q1
17 B–N2 NxB
18 PxN N–N5

On anything else White had BxNch followed by N–Q4.

19 BxP!

Simple and direct.

19 . . . QR–N1
20 P–B6



White has won a pawn and will use it to decisive advantage.

20 . . . K–B2

There is nothing better. If 20 . . . NxPch 21 K–N1 N–N5 22 N–Q4 and penetration either via K6 or N5 is decisive; whereas if 20 . . . N–Q6ch 21 K–B2 N–B4 22 RxRch RxR 23 R–Q1 R–N1 24 R–Q7! and wins.

21 N–Q4 P–K3

Or again 21 . . . NxPch 22 K–N1 N–N5 23 N–N5.

22 N–N5 N–Q4

Hoping that this solidly placed Knight will be an anchor.

23 RxN!

Anchors aweigh!

23 . . . PxR

Or 23 . . . RxR 24 NxBP R–B4ch 25 K–N1, and there is nothing to be done against N–R6.

24 NxBP KR–QB1
25 BxR RxB
26 NxP RxPch
27 K–Q2 K–K3
28 N–B3 Resigns

Mikhail Tal

The third of the new Soviet geniuses who crossed swords with Botvinnik, Mikhail Tal, is one of the most romantic figures in the history of chess, with a gift for combinations second to none and equaled by few. Born in Riga in 1936, he was known only in Latvian chess circles until in 1957, although only twenty years old, he suddenly acquired the titles of Soviet master and Soviet champion at the same time. Thereafter he won the Candidates' Tournament and in 1960 wrested the world title from Botvinnik, until then the youngest official world champion in the history of the game (though Morphy was only 21 in 1858).* The score of his victory was overwhelming: six wins to two, with thirteen games drawn. Yet the very next year Botvinnik again surprised everybody by taking the title back from him.

Thereafter Tal's results became very spotty. In the Candidates' Tournament at Curaçao in 1962 he was ill and could only finish seventh out of eight. Never again was he able to secure the coveted right to play the world champion for the title, although he seemed to be regaining some of his old form in 1973, when he suddenly collapsed again. In spite of his uneven results, he was always near the top. In the 1973 FIDE world ranking he was placed in a tie for second with Karpov, outdistanced only by Fischer.

In 1961, shortly after winning the title, Tal wrote a brief autobiography, which we give here (in translation).

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* Karpov was only 23 when he gained the title in 1975.

I have not lived very long yet, so I cannot say very much about myself. Even my chess career is of short duration. So I could not even imagine finding 100 satisfactory games*. . . . But first of all many of my opponents have helped me by defeating me in good style, and these games I publish with pleasure. . . . Second, I know naturally that the games of my childhood and youth will not stand up to serious criticism, but in almost every one there is something instructive to be found.

So, I was born in Riga on November 9, 1936. My father, a physician, specialist in internal medicine, loved the game a lot and played in about the second category. My father bequeathed his noble profession of healing the sick to his oldest son (I am ten years younger than my brother) and to me, the youngest, he bequeathed his love for a game which is no less noble.

How did that happen?

My father, chief of a hospital, had many patients. Many came to play chess with him, as well as to get his medical advice. At times they would also while away the waiting time with the royal game. The little seven-year-old was often an interested spectator in these games. For a while it was really a mystery to me how the Knight ("Springer") jumps ("springt"). With the solution of this problem began my "theoretical" and practical instruction from my father. After a brief two months I was able to challenge my father, and not always unsuccessfully, in his second major skill. It is lucky for the reader of this book that the games of this period have not been preserved.

My first, but very unlucky, appearance in the chess arena, occurred when I entered the fifth grade. My further career was virtually the same as that of all Soviet grandmasters and masters. First came success in the grade, then in school, and finally, at the end of 1947, in team competition. Naturally I reached the House of Pioneers as "champion among champions" and began the real study of the true game.

Here we learned from our teacher and comrade, the chess enthusiast Janis Kruskop, to love and honor chess, not just to understand it. His sudden premature death in the beginning of 1960 was a sad blow of fate for all Latvian chess players. In the next four years I was not yet big enough to become a member of the Riga Chess Club. There were a group of us then, constant opponents on the chess board and constant friends in life: Gipslis, Kljavin, Zilber, Klovan, Pasman, etc. On the endless ladder of the art of chess we climbed one step after another, ever higher. We learned and played many offhand games with one another. We fought in the junior championships of Riga, Latvia, and the U.S.S.R., where we met the best of the best, like Spassky, Polugaevsky, Lutikov. In the course of these battles during the period 1949–1954, I managed to work my way up from last board on the Latvian team to first board. When my beard began to grow, I did not leave my old team but took over the uneasy, painstaking office of Trainer.

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* This autobiography was written for the series *Weltgeschichte des Schachs* (World History of Chess), for which each participant is asked to contribute 100 games.

Everything was very interesting, and I have the most pleasant memories of this period. But sooner or later our wish to fight it out with real grown-up chess players becomes more and more irresistible.

The year 1950 draws to a close. Some schoolboys are permitted for the first time to participate in the championship of Riga. All those who reach the quarter-finals are thereby elevated to the first category. In the semifinals there is only one left. In the finals all the young players play well, and the Latvian championship experiences a sensation: victory falls to the lot of one of us, Mark Pasman. Almost all of us then press forward to the chess throne of the republic (myself in particular in 1953). Incidentally, in six Latvian championships I scored a full success only once.

In the championship of the Soviet Union, to which several of us were admitted, the situation was very favorable for me. When I managed to defend my republic's honor in the team tournaments of the U.S.S.R., I won the right to combat with master players. In this match I received the honorable title of master when I defeated W. Saigin in 1954. And as a result I was admitted to the finals of the championship of the U.S.S.R.

The story of the championship of the U.S.S.R. as well as of the international tournaments is known to everybody.

My simultaneous success in becoming a master of the U.S.S.R. and a Soviet grandmaster in 1957 was a surprise to me, even if every soldier carries a marshal's baton in his gear.

The repetition of these successes in the next year, 1958, gave me the right to take part in the preliminaries for the world championship.

There were two dramatic episodes in this struggle. First there was the exciting, magnificent obstacle course in Yugoslavia, where the marvelous grandmaster Paul Keres displayed talent, energy, and knowledge with extraordinary power. And second naturally the match with the chief figure in Soviet and world chess, Mikhail Botvinnik, who had been unchallenged champion for many years.

We met on the sixty-four squares for the first time. His terrifying strength I had known up to this point only from the laconic scores of his games. Now I came to know him personally. Several times in the early games I managed to rescue myself from his iron grip only by some kind of miracle. It was only in the second half of the match, when I was already ahead, that I acquired the conviction that I could beat my opponent with his own weapons.

After the match I was often asked how I did it and what my further plans were.

Many favorable circumstances combined to produce the good result. I had a happy upbringing, as long as my father was alive, and I also encountered much understanding for my individuality in my dear mother; they advanced my desire and enthusiasm for what is now the substance of my life. School and university gave me the wish to work, led me into a world full of interesting and significant occurrences, and gave me everything that is indispensable for every branch of human activity.

I have noteworthy chess teachers and friends. Of these Alexander Koblenc, with whom I have shared all successes and disappointments, must be mentioned particularly.

I live in a country in which the drive for creative achievement is universally recognized and assisted. That is why we have millions of chess players and twenty grandmasters. They are the basis for Soviet world superiority in chess.

When I think of the future, rosy visions appear before me. First in my wife I have the best of all seconds and friends. Further, they're always telling me that I am the youngest of all world champions. So much the better! I still have a lot of time, and that is why I hope that I can provide even more mature games for a further volume in *The World History of Chess*. But I am also certain that there will be no absolutely perfect games without errors. And that is why chess (and that is also its charm) is not only science, art, and sport, but a simultaneous union of these and perhaps all creative activities.

Tal and Fischer have been the two greatest creative geniuses to appear in the chess firmament since World War II. At the Candidates' Tournament in 1959, when Tal acquired the right to challenge Botvinnik officially, he won every game against the young American. Although flawed, these combats are still among the best ever seen on the chess board.

FISCHER TAL

Candidates' Tournament
Yugoslavia, 1959
Sicilian Defense

1 **P–K4** **P–QB4**

The ambiguous interpretation of many openings by modern grandmasters is an outstanding feature of contemporary chess. Both of these great players can handle the Sicilian equally well with either White or Black—nothing ever seems definitely settled in their minds about the opening. What counts is that it leads to a good fight.

2 N–KB3 P–Q3
3 P–Q4 PxP
4 NxP N–KB3
5 N–QB3 P–QR3

Formerly known as the Paulsen variation, nowadays it has been rebaptized the Najdorf variation, after the Polish-Argentinian master who popularized it following World War II. The idea is to retain a variety of options for Black.

6 B–QB4

One of Fischer's favorite lines; the possibilities of sacrifice and attack are almost endless. If now 6 . . . N–B3, for example, 7 NxN PxN 8 P–K5! leads to a strong attack because 8 . . . PxP? is refuted by BxPch. However, the older 6 B–K2 is also good.

6 . . . P–K3
7 B–N3 B–K2
8 P–B4

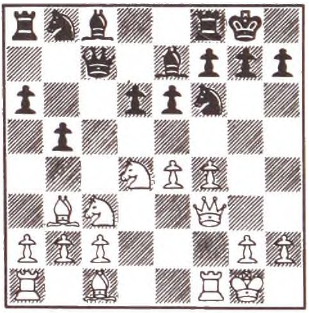
The routine continuation, which boomerangs here. On the alternative 8 B–K3 O–O 9 O–O N–B3 *10* P–B4 NxN *11* BxN P–QN4 *12* P–QR3 B–N2 *13* Q–Q3 which Fischer tried in the fourth game of his 1972 match with Spassky, *13* . . . P–QR4! led to an easy equality; White accepted the sacrifice and should have lost.

8 . . . O–O
9 Q–B3 Q–B2
10 O–O

Castling Q-side is a possible alternative here.

10 . . . P–QN4!

Throwing down the gauntlet. If now *11* P–K5 B–N2 *12* Q–N3 N–R4 *13* Q–N4 P–N3 and Black's position holds easily; or even more simply *11* . . . PxP *12* PxP QxP *13* QxR QxNch *14* K–R1 B–Q3 with a winning attack (*15* Q–B3 B–N2!).



11 P–B5

Accepting the challenge, he continues with the normal K-side attack. However, *11* P–QR3 was more prudent.

11 . . . P–N5

An active counter, which takes advantage of the fact that the normal retreat QN–K2 is now impossible because of . . . P–K4.

12 N–R4

The Knight turns out to be badly misplaced here, but there are no really satisfactory alternatives. If for example *12* N–Q1 P–K4 *13* N–K2 P–QR4! *14* P–QR4 B–N3 *15* N–B2 QN–Q2 *16* P–N4 N–B4 and White already has to give up one of his powerful Bishops.

12 . . . P–K4
13 N–K2 B–N2
14 N–N3

Blocking the advance of the KNP, but the move was unavoidable because of the poor placement of the QN.

14 . . . QN–Q2
15 B–K3 B–B3!

Taking advantage of the uncomfortable horseman on the side, he sets out to free himself of the backward QP.

16 B–B2 Q–N2
17 KR–K1

The only way to hold on to the KP, but he cannot stop the liberating break.

17 . . . P–Q4

Once this break can occur Black usually has all the play; that is the case here.

18 PxP NxP
19 N–K4

The threat was to win a piece with . . . N–QN3, uncovering on the White Queen.

19 . . . N–B5

The pin is very uncomfortable, though it is not clear how Black will follow up. Tal soon shows us.

20 P–B4

Desperately trying to get some air. On the alternative *20* P–B3 Black can reply simply . . . P–QR4.

20 . . . P–N3!

Typical Tal: with this cool move he rips White's position apart. If for instance *21* P–N3 N–R6ch 22 K–N2 N–N4 wins.

21 PxP

To gain some counterplay. If instead *21* P–N4 PxP 22 PxP K–R1 23 B–N3 R–N1 *24* K–R1 N–B3 and White is defenseless against the numerous threats. If 25 QR–Q1 QR–Q1 anyhow, and White can neither stand still nor go forward.

21 . . . P–B4
22 P–N7! KxP

Black sees a simple forced win, and so he does not bother with complications like 22 . . . KR–Q1.

23 Q–N3ch K–R1

Fischer has in fact lifted the pin on the Queen, but now he is faced with an equally devastating pin on his KN2 square.

24 N(K4)–B5

Otherwise . . . R–KN1 wins at once.

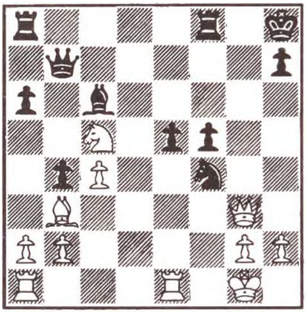
24 . . . NxN
25 BxN!

A clever defense, for if now 25 . . . R–KN1 26 QxN! PxQ 27 RxB with counterchances.

25 . . . BxBch!

An equally clever reply. The threats against KN2 can wait.

26 NxB



26 . . . Q–QB2!

Decisive. White must now give up some material to defend himself against the threats. If instead 26 . . . Q–R2? 27 Q–K3 threatens QxPch, giving White an out.

27 Q–K3

Threatening QxPch.

27 . . . QR–K1!

Which is met easily enough. Now KN2 cannot be defended; so White is helpless.

28 R–K2

Desperation. On 28 P–N3 Black can reply either 28 . . . N–N7 or more directly 28 . . . N–R6ch 29 K–B1 P–B5.

28 . . . NxRch
29 QxN BxP!

An elegant finish.

30 NxP Q–R2ch
31 KxB R–N1ch
32 K–R3

Or 32 K–B3 P–K5ch 33 K–B4 R–N5ch.

32 . . . Q–KN2!

Tal now plays for mate, naturally.

33 B–Q1 R–K3

Now there is nothing to be done against . . . R–R3ch.

Resigns

Tal stresses in his autobiography that there are no perfect games. In the following, from the match in which he dethroned Botvinnik, he displays some of the combinative magic which has made him so famous. He challenges his opponent with complications which are almost too difficult to calculate over the board, and in the ensuing melee the champion does go wrong.

BOTVINNIK TAL

6th Game, World Championship Match, 1960

King's Indian Defense

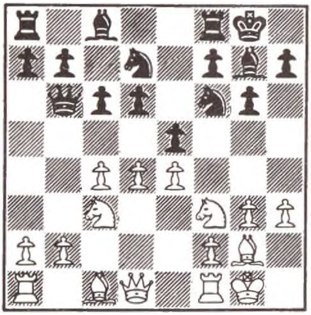
1 P–QB4 N–KB3
2 N–KB3 P–KN3
3 P–KN3 B–N2

Another of the two-edged lines of which Tal is so fond; he seems to be able to play them equally well with both sides.

4 B–N2	O–O
5 P–Q4	P–Q3
6 N–B3	QN–Q2
7 O–O	P–K4
8 P–K4	P–B3
9 P–KR3	

To play the Bishop to K3 without fearing . . . N–N5.

9 . . . Q–N3!



Tal has won many brilliant games with this variation, which depends on the numerous tactical finesses available. If for example *10* R–K1 R–K1 *11* P–N3? PxP *12* NxP P–Q4!, and White is in trouble because of the exposed long diagonal.

10 P–Q5

Locks the center to avoid any surprises. But now Black equalizes with ease.

10 . . .	PxP
11 BPxP	N–B4
12 N–K1	

No improvement on the more usual *12* R–K1.

12 . . .	B–Q2
13 N–Q3	NxN
14 QxN	KR–B1

Black has already equalized.

15 R–N1 N–R4

Preparing the break with . . . P–B4.

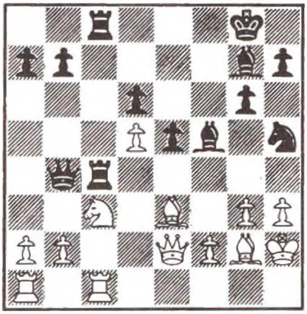
16 B–K3	Q–N5!
17 Q–K2	R–B5
18 KR–B1	QR–QB1
19 K–R2	P–B4

Long in preparation.

20 PxP BxP

This was the idea.

21 R–QR1



21 . . . N–B5!!?

Pure Tal. In an extraordinarily complicated position he trusts his judgment.

22 PxN

White can scarcely reject the sacrifice: if 22 Q–Q2 NxB 23 KxN P–KR4, with a commanding position.

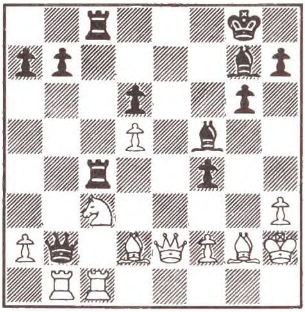
22 . . . PxP

Opening numerous lines for the attack; but is it sound?

23 B–Q2 QxP

Thus he already has two pawns for the piece.

24 QR–N1



No doubt counting on 21 . . . BxR 22 RxB Q–B7 23 RxP, and White comes into his own.

24 . . . P–B6!

The in-between move that Tal had in mind. Now it becomes extremely difficult to calculate all the possibilities.

25 RxQ??

And wonder of wonders, Botvinnik does go wrong. Subsequent analysis has established that White can win with 25 BxP!; there are two main variations after 25 . . . BxR 26 RxB Q–B7 27 B–K4!:

I. 27 . . . RxB 28 NxR QxR 29 NxP R–B1 30 Q–K6ch K–R1 31 N–B7ch RxN 32 QxR Q–B4 33 QxQ PxQ 34 K–N3 B–K4ch 35 B–B4 and White should win the ending.

II. 27 . . . RxB 28 NxR B–K4ch 29 K–N2 QxR 30 NxP! BxN 31 Q–K6ch K–N2 32 Q–Q7ch and again White wins the endgame.

25 . . . PxQ

Black now threatens to win a piece with . . . BxN, while the KP cannot be taken because it would uncover the White Rook at QN2.

26 R–N3

Apparently Botvinnik had counted on this resource.

26 . . . R–Q5!

But had overlooked this powerful reply, which wins in all variations.

27 B–K1

If 27 NxP RxB and Black's Rook at B1 is defended. And if 27 B–K3 RxN 28 R(N3)xR R–Q8.

27 . . . B–K4ch
28 K–N1 B–B5

Good enough to win, but the most direct line was 28 . . . RxN 29 R(N3)xR R–Q8 30 R–B4 B–N7.

29 NxP RxR
30 NxR(Q4)

There is nothing else. If instead 30 NxR(B1) BxN 31 RxP R–Q8 32 K–B1 B–Q6ch, winning a piece.

30 . . . RxBch
31 B–B1 B–K5

Black is now a healthy pawn to the good and in addition maintains a strong bind on the White position. The rest is easy.

32 N–K2 B–K4
33 P–B4

On 33 RxP B–Q6 again wins a piece.

33 . . . B–B3
34 RxP BxP

Preventing RxRP because of . . . RxN, followed by . . . B–Q5ch.

35 R–QB7 BxP
36 RxQRP B–B5

If now 36 . . . RxN?, White has the out 37 R–R8ch.

37 R–R8ch K–B2
38 R–R7ch

Black's Bishops command the board. If here 38 K–B2 B–R5ch wins a piece.

38 . . . K–K3
39 R–R3

So that if now 39 . . . BxN? 40 R–K3ch will draw.

39 . . . P–Q4!

White is still tied hand and foot.

40 K–B2

On other moves the advance of the QP will be decisive.

40 . . . B–R5ch
41 K–N2 K–Q3
42 N–N3

Desperation.

42 . . . BxN
43 BxB PxB
44 KxB K–Q4
45 R–R7 P–B6
46 R–QB7 K–Q5
Resigns

Usually Tal begins the opening quietly, preferring to let the combinations come out slowly. But in the following game, against another world champion, he essays an unusual gambit early, which leads to stunning fireworks.

SPASSKY TAL

Tallinn, 1973

Nimzo-Indian Defense

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 N–QB3 B–N5
4 B–N5

Considered by most theoreticians to be a rather weak continuation, but it has long been a favorite of Spassky's.

4 . . . P–KR3
5 B–R4 P–B4
6 P–Q5 P–QN4!?

The gambit continuation, which works out well here, though again its theoretical value is unclear. The simple 6 . . . BxNch suffices to equalize at least after 7 PxB P–K4 8 P–Q6 P–KN4 9 B–N3 N–B3.

7 QPxP BPxP
8 PxP P–Q4

As in the Wing Gambit in the Sicilian or in the Benko Gambit, Black's compensation lies in his strong pawns in the center and his free and easy development.

9 P–K3 O–O
10 N–B3

This normal move has been criticized and the alternative *10* B–Q3 recommended to allow N–K2. The whole area however is still uncharted, which suits Tal more than it does Spassky.

10 . . . Q–R4

Besides the immediate threat, . . . N–K5 is planned. This explains White's next move.

11 BxN RxB
12 Q–Q2

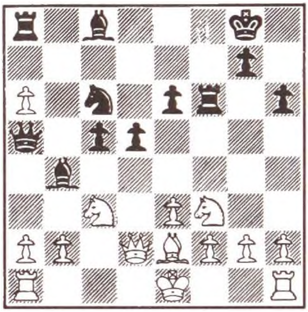
More or less forced, since *12* R–B1 can be met by *12* . . . QxRP.

12 . . . P–R3
13 PxP

After the game Tal said that this is the losing move; however that is certainly hard to see at this point. *13* P–QR4? would be met by *13* . . . PxP *14* BxP BxN *15* QxB QxB *16* PxQ RxRch, and Black comes out with two Rooks and a piece for the Queen.

13 . . . N–B3
14 B–K2

Oblivious of what is coming; Tal is now in his element.



14 . . . P–Q5!
15 PxP RxN!

Naturally.

16 BxR PxP

White must now pay immediate attention to the threats engendered by this pawn.

17 O–O

There is nothing better. If *17* BxN PxN, and if *17* R–QB1 BxP *18* BxN R–Q1 *19* P–QR3 PxN is decisive.

17 . . . PxN
18 PxP BxBP

Black has come out with two pieces for a Rook and a pawn but has numerous threats all over.

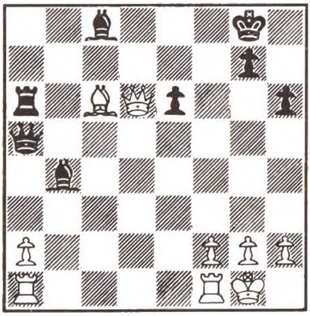
White must continue to defend aggressively.

19 Q–Q6 RxP
20 BxN

White still seems to have a lot of play left; e.g., 20 . . . BxR? 21 RxB Q–B6 22 Q–Q8ch K–R2 23 B–K4ch, or 20 . . . B–K4 21 Q–K7, with satisfactory defenses.

20 . . . B–N5!

But against this powerful attack, White has to give up the Bishop. It is again impressive how the Black Bishops dominate the board.



21 Q–N8?

Now he becomes needlessly aggressive. A better defensive plan lay in 21 Q–Q3 RxB 22 QR–B1 B–B4 (otherwise the ending would be a fairly easy draw) 23 KR–Q1, and it is not at all clear how Black will win, or even that he has a won game.

21 . . . RxB
22 QR–B1

Hereabouts Spassky continues to pursue the wrong plan. With the text he forces Black to move where he wants to go. Better was 22 QR–N1 B–B4 23 Q–KN3. If then 23 . . . QxP 24 R–N8 and White has counterplay, and a clear win is not yet in sight for Black.

22 . . . B–B4
23 R–B2 Q–R5
24 Q–N3

Now he begins to make sense. If 24 KR–B1? BxPch wins.

24 . . . Q–KN5

Black does not have a clear win and has to grope for complications. The Russian commentators have recommended 24 . . . Q–KB5, but there is nothing definite even after 25 Q–N5 Q–QB2 26 R–N1.

25 Q–N3 Q–B4
26 KR–B1 B–N2

Now Black is building up to all kinds of threats, paradoxically because of the White build-up on the QB-file. If 27 Q–N8ch K–R2 28 QxB BxPch wins.

27 Q–KB3 Q–N4!

With a direct threat of . . . BxPch, for if then QxB, QxRch!, and if KxB, RxRch, uncovering on the Queen.

28 Q–QN3?

Tal knows how to pose problems, but Spassky does not know how to master them. Here 28 P–KR3 could still have held the game.

28 . . . R–B2!!

Tempting him with 29 QxPch K–R2 30 Q–R3, when 30 . . . B–K5!! wins, for if now 31 R–B4 BxPch 32 KxB Q–Q7ch 33 K–N1 RxR and wins.

29 P–N3

Now it is too late. If 29 Q–KR3 BxPch 30 KxB Q–B5ch 31 K–K1 (or 31 K–N1 Q–Q5ch 32 K–B1 RxR 33 RxR Q–Q8ch) 31 . . . Q–K4ch 32 K–B2 Q–Q5ch 33 K–K1 Q–K5ch 34 K–Q2 R–Q2ch and White is in a mating net.

29 . . . BxPch!!
30 KxB Q–B3ch

Quicker is 30 . . . Q–KB4ch. Maybe Tal had rather see his opponent suffer than bring it to a quick end.

31 K–K1 Q–K4ch
32 K–B1 B–R3ch
33 K–N1 Q–Q5ch
34 K–N2 Q–K5ch
35 K–N1 B–N2
36 P–KR4

There is no defense.

36 . . . Q–R8ch
37 K–B2 R–B2ch
38 K–K2 Q–K5ch
Resigns

Mate cannot be staved off too long. If 39 Q–K3 B–R3ch 40 K–Q2 R–Q2ch and the Queen goes.

In its beauty and its almost unfathomable complexity over the board, this is a game typical of Tal.

Lajos Portisch

Of the new names that began to appear in the age of Botvinnik that of the Hungarian Lajos Portisch soon became one of the most significant. Born in Zalaegerszeg in 1937, Portisch first secured international renown by representing Hungary in the World Junior Championship (a number of the postwar grandmasters have taken part in this) in 1955, when he finished fourth. Shortly thereafter, in 1958, he won the Hungarian Championship for the first time and has remained the strongest Hungarian player ever since, quite a feat for that country, whose outstanding heritage of first-class grandmasters goes back all the way to the nineteenth century.

In 1961 he became an international grandmaster Thereupon he became a professional, playing regularly in various international affairs. In the competition for the world championship he has reached candidates' level a number of times, but never further. One of his best results was at San Antonio in 1972, where he finished in a tie for first with Karpov and

Petrosian. In the world ranking for 1973 he was tied for fifth with Korchnoi.

In style he is a profound strategist, placing the major emphasis on careful opening play. Here is an example against the veteran American grandmaster Sammy Reshevsky.

PORTISCH RESHEVSKY

Petropolis, 1973

Sicilian Defense
(by transposition)

1 P–QB4 P–QB4
2 N–KB3 P–KN3
3 P–K4 N–QB3
4 P–Q4 PxP
5 NxP N–B3

By transposition the Maroczy Bind variation of the Sicilian has been reached. Strategically superior for White, it has still been shown that Black can equalize by quick sharp tactical thrusts.

6 N–QB3 NxN

This is one of them: the early exchange of Knights gives Black a good deal of freedom; otherwise the retreat N–B2 will be onerous.

7 QxN P–Q3

Necessary to prevent P–K5.

8 B–N5 B–N2
9 Q–Q2 O–O

Reshevsky plays too timidly, drifting into a poor position. In a similar position in the fourth game of his match against Petrosian in 1971, Fischer played for a counterattack with *9* . . . B–K3 achieving quick equality, though Petrosian had better.

10 B–Q3 P–QR4

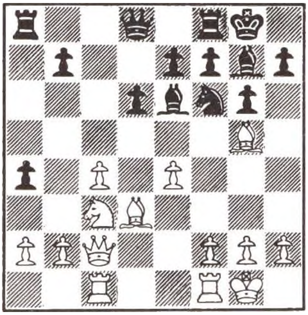
A dubious move which gets Black into trouble. *10* . . . B–K3 was the indicated line.

11 O–O P–R5 [illegible]

The objective of ~~Whit~~e's strategy has now become clear: to isolate the QBP artificially. Still, White has too much counterplay.

12 QR–B1 B–K3
13 Q–B2

Attacking the exposed RP. Sharp tactical exchange now ensues.



13 . . . N–Q2!

Protecting the pawn indirectly, for if now *14* NxP? Q–R4 wins a piece.

14 P–B4 R–B1!

Again protecting ingeniously: if now *15* NxP? P–N4 is strong.

15 P–QN3

He decides to forego the threats against the QRP; Black has too much counterplay, as is so often the case here. Now he threatens to win a piece with P–B5.

15 . . . PxP
16 PxP N–B3
17 K–R1

A slight imprecision which gives Reshevsky an unexpected chance. More exact was *17* P–B5 at once.

17 . . . Q–R4

Some commentators have suggested *17* . . . P–Q4!? here. In reply White has *18* KPxP NxP *19* NxN BxN *20* Q–K2 B–K3 *21* P–B5 PxP *22* RxP! with a strong attack; *22* BxBP is also good here.

18 P–KB5 B–Q2
19 N–Q5

Threatening both NxPch and BxN. Black no longer has any good defense.

19 . . . Q–Q1

19 . . . NxN *20* KPxN is no improvement.

20 Q–B2!

An ingenious transfer maneuver which gets the Queen to the K-side very quickly.

20 . . . B–B3

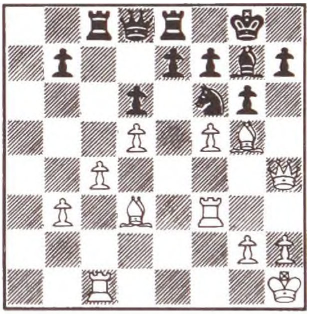
It is hard to suggest anything better. If *20* . . . NxN *21* KPxN P–B3 *22* B–K3 P–KN4 *23* B–N6 Q–K1 *24* P–KN4 Black is completely bottled up.

21 Q–R4

Apart from the constant threat against the Black Knight, Portisch plans to win with R–B3–R3.

21 . . . BxN
22 KPxB R–K1
23 R–KB3!

Anyhow. The defense gets no chance to rest.



23 . . . N–Q2

To reply to *24* R–R3 with . . . N–B1. But such cramped positions invariably cry out for a sacrifice, which is soon forthcoming.

24 QR–KB1 B–B3

Allows the combination. In such positions hard-boiled defense usually offers the best chance, but if here *24* . . . N–B1 *25* R–R3 P–B3 *26* PxP! PxB *27*

RxNch! KxR 28 R–B3ch B–B3 29 QxP and mate is unavoidable.

25 R–R3 N–B1
26 PxP BPxP
27 BxP!!

The denouement. Now Black's position falls apart.

27 . . . PxB

Or 27 . . . NxB 28 QxPch K–B1 29 B–R6 mate.

28 RxB! Resigns

Black does not wait for the outcome. After 28 . . . PxR there could follow 29 Q–R8ch K–B2 30 R–R7ch NxR 31 QxNch K–B1 32 B–R6 mate.

In every generation some pair of masters is found one of whom seems to have the "Indian sign" on the other. Portisch for a long time seemed to have it on Petrosian, even while the latter was world champion. It was only broken in the quarter-finals for the world title in 1973. But in that contest Portisch scored one beautiful victory.

PORTISCH PETROSIAN

World Championship Quarter-finals, 1973

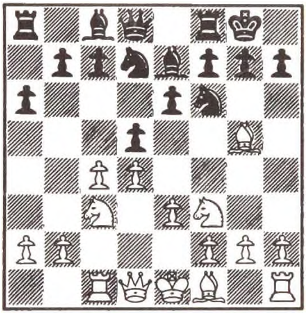
Queen's Gambit Declined

1 P–Q4 P–Q4
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 N–QB3 B–K2

Perhaps challenging him to try 4 P–K4.

4 N–B3 N–KB3
5 B–N5 O–O
6 P–K3 QN–Q2
7 R–B1 P–QR3!?

This antipositional move, discarded for a long time, has recently been revived. Actually, Portisch had lost a game with this variation as Black against the Czech grandmaster Hort just a few months before at Madrid. Petrosian, familiar with that game, thought he had an improvement.



8 P–B5 P–B3
9 B–Q3 P–QN3
10 PxP!

An improvement on the older *10* P–QN4 P–QR4 *11* P–QR3, which is not so dangerous as had been thought.

10 . . . P–B4

Portisch had played *10* . . . QxP against Hort and lost; the text is Petrosian's improvement.

11 O–O P–B5
12 B–B2 NxP

This is what he had relied on. If instead *12* . . . QxP *13* N–QR4 Q–N4 *14* N–K5 preserves the pressure.

13 **N–K5** **B–N2**
14 **P–B4**

The classic bind in the Queen's Gambit, known to be extremely dangerous since the famous Pillsbury–Tarrasch game at Hastings 1895 (see p. 73).

14 . . . **R–N1?**

But this is inconsistent. He should have tried *14* . . . R–B1, and then . . . N–K5. The text just loses time.

15 **P–B5** **QN–Q2**

Now he is back in the bind position, with little to show for it.

16 **B–B4!**

Gains an important tempo.

16 . . . **R–B1**

Forced.

17 **Q–B3**

White has an overwhelming position. Petrosian tries to free himself by offering a pawn, but it does not work.

17 . . . **PxP**
18 **BxP** **NxN**
19 **PxN** **N–K5**

He does not like the defensive position after *19* . . . N–K1 *20* QR–Q1.

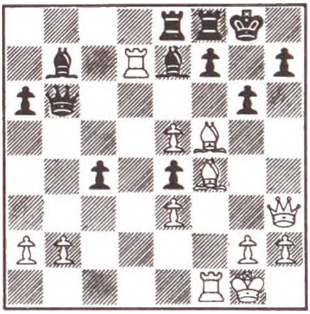
20 **NxN** **PxN**
21 **Q–R3!**

There was no particular reason why he could not accept the pawn sacrifice, but he is out for bigger game. The finish is striking, somewhat similar to the previous game's.

21 . . . **P–N3**
22 **QR–Q1** **Q–N3**
23 **R–Q7!**

The point: White is out for the attack.

23 . . . **QR–K1**



24 **P–K6!**

Shutting the Queen out from the K-side defense.

24 . . . **PxB**

There is nothing else. If *24* . . . B–B1 *25* PxPch RxP *26* B–K6 BxR *27* BxRch KxB *28* QxB and wins because of the exposed position of the Black King.

25 RxKB!!	RxR
26 Q–N3ch	K–R1
27 B–R6	PxP

Giving up in effect. But if instead 27 . . . R–KN1 28 Q–K5ch P–B3 29 QxPch R(K2)–N2 30 R–Q1! is decisive, since Black is helpless against the threat of BxRch followed by R–Q8ch.

28 BxR	R–Q2
29 B–R6	

The threat now is 30 Q–K5ch followed by RxP, and if . . . PxR, White has Q–K8 mate.

29 . . .	Q–R4
30 Q–QN8ch	Q–Q1
31 Q–K5ch	K–N1
32 QxPch	R–B2
33 RxP	Resigns

There is no perpetual after 33 . . . Q–Q8ch 34 K–B2 Q–Q7ch 35 K–N3 Q–K8ch 36 K–R3, and on other moves White wins easily; e.g., 33 . . . Q–Q2 34 QxQ RxQ 35 R–B8 mate.

Bent Larsen

Bent Larsen, the first native-born Danish grandmaster in chess history (Nimzovich was a Russian) was born in Copenhagen in 1935. After showing himself to be head and heels above his countrymen, he reached out for international competition. An early success was the best result at the top board in the Olympiad of 1956 in Moscow. From then until 1970 he had a long string of victories and seemed to be, with Bobby Fischer, the best player in the Western world. In fact, in the match of the U.S.S.R. vs. the rest of the world in 1970, he played top board when Bobby, to everybody's surprise, agreed to play second.

In 1971 came his greatest chance for the title, when he reached the quarter-finals. His opponent was none other than Bobby. Everybody expected a close contest. Instead, to the consternation of his admirers, he was crushed, losing all six games, unable to draw even one. After this devastating loss his results have been less impressive, though he may yet make a good comback. In the world ranking for 1973 he was tenth.

Larsen shares with Nimzovich the love for complex, unappetizing positions, which has been his strength as well as his weakness. The strange-looking Larsen Opening, 1 P–QN3, is his hallmark. While he can often surprise opponents, even the greatest, with his odd variations, at other times he is baffled by the peculiar positions that he gets into. If he played the openings more carefully, he could probably get further.

The following game is memorable in that it was Bobby's last loss before he began the incredible winning streak which culminated in his winning the championship.

FISCHER LARSEN

Palma de Majorca, 1970

Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 N–KB3 P–Q3
3 P–Q4 PxP
4 NxP N–KB3
5 N–QB3 N–B3
6 B–B4

Again Bobby's favorite attack.

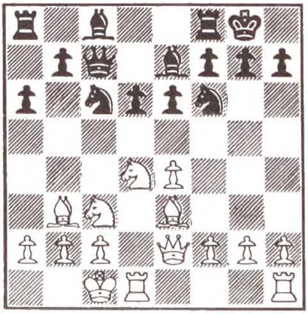
6 . . . P–K3
7 B–N3 B–K2
8 B–K3 O–O
9 Q–K2

Preparing to castle on the Q-side, a sharp line with chances for both sides.

9 . . . P–QR3

It is necessary to prevent N–N5 in most variations.

10 O–O–O Q–B2



11 P–N4!

Typical Fischer: this is the standard attacking approach against the Sicilian, and so he does it at once regardless of the risks.

11 . . . N–Q2

The alternative is *11* . . . NxN *12* BxN P–K4 *13* P–N5 PxB *14* PxN BxP *15* N–Q5 Q–Q1 *16* P–KB4, and the extra pawn is of little value to Black.

12 P–KR4

The standard K-side storm. A game Velimirovic–Bukal, Pula 1971, continued instead *12* N–B5!? PxN *13* N–Q5 Q–Q1 *14* NPxP and White won in dashing style; but this is evidently too risky for Bobby.

12 . . . N–B4

Making sure that he will get rid of the dangerous White Bishop.

13 P–N5 P–N4

With the threat of . . . P–N5, winning the KP.

14 P–B3 B–Q2

Here the immediate . . . P–N5 was somewhat more logical, since the natural retreat to K2 is impossible.

15 Q–N2 P–N5
16 N(B3)–K2 NxBch
17 RPxN

This move is of course to be avoided by White, but if instead *17* NxN P–QR4 *18* K–N1 P–R5 *19* N(N3)–Q4 N–K4 gives Black the better of it, according to Larsen.

17 . . . **P–QR4**

Now Black is threatening a dangerous attack with . . . P–R5.

18 **P–N6!**

At least maintaining the initiative with a temporary pawn sacrifice.

18 . . . **BPxP**

Black must capture, since the lines will be opened anyhow. On the alternative *18* . . . RPxP *19* P–R5 opens both the KN- and KR-files.

19 **P–R5** **NxN**

On *19* . . . P–R5 *20* PxP P–R3 *21* BxP breaks through first.

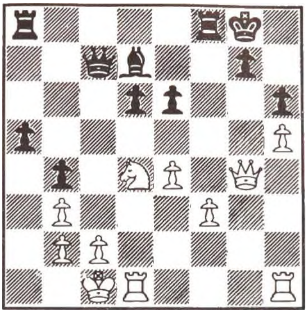
20 **NxN**

Subsequent analysis showed that after *20* RxN P–N4! *21* BxP BxB *22* QxB P–R5, White's threats are soon exhausted, while Black's are not.

20 . . . **P–N4**
21 **BxP** **BxBch**
22 **QxB** **P–R3!**

Larsen defends himself coolly.

23 **Q–N4**



Stirring up new trouble with the potential pin, but he has little time, for if *23* Q–N3 P–R5 hastens Black's counterplay.

23 . . . **R–B2!**
24 **KR–N1**

He cannot afford to take the KP: if *24* NxKP Q–B1 *25* RxP R–K2, and White does not have enough for the piece.

24 . . . **P–R5!**

24 . . . P–K4 *25* N–B5 is less convincing.

25 **PxP**

He has little choice.

25 . . . **P–K4!**
26 **N–K6!**

The best chance: if *26* N–B5 BxN *27* PxB RxRP *28* K–Q2 (the threat was . . . P–N6) P–Q4 with an overwhelming position.

26 . . . **Q–B5!**

Avoiding the trap: not now *26* . . . Q–B1? *27* RxP R–K2 *28* Qx

Pch! RxQ 29 RxRch K–R1 30 R(Q6)xB and wins. Note how precise the timing has to be here.

27 P–N3

Feeling that his best hope lies in the ending. Analysis does indicate that the Black attack is stronger now: e.g., if 27 RxP BxP! 28 R–Q2 BxP! 29 RxB (there is no time for NxP and QxPch would be fruitless now) R–R8ch 30 K–Q2 R–Q2ch wins.

27 . . . **QxN**
28 QxQ **BxQ**
29 RxP **R–K1**

Even though White has only two pawns for the Bishop, the technical problems are formidable.

30 R–QN6 **RxP**
31 RxP **R–QB1!**

Threatening . . . BxP.

32 K–N2 **R–B7**

Now the White pawn phalanx on the Q-side has been contained.

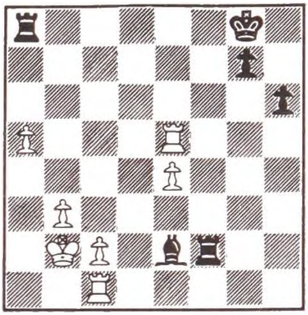
33 R–QB1 **B–B2**

Winning this important pawn; now the road will be cleared for the advance of his own KRP.

34 P–R5 **R–R1**

Necessary sooner or later.

35 R–N5 **BxRP**
36 RxP **B–K7**



The ending is difficult, but the outcome certain: Larsen will win by advancing his own K-side pawns, while containing the enemy pawns with his extra piece.

37 R–QB5

White's pawns get in his way: if 37 P–N4 P–R4 and then 38 P–N5 is impossible because of . . . RxP.

37 . . . **P–R4**
38 P–K5 **B–B6**

Preparing the open road for the RP.

39 K–B3 **P–R5**
40 K–Q3 **R–K7**

The threat was K–K3.

41 R–B1 **R–Q1ch**
42 K–B3 **B–K5**

The extra piece over and over gives Black extra time for the advance of his pawns.

43 K–N4 **R–N1ch**
44 K–R3

Or *44* R–N5 RxRch *45* KxR P–R6. White is lost.

44 . . . P–R6
45 P–K6 BxP

Many others win too. White however was threatening R–K5.

46 P–N4 R–K6ch
47 K–N2 B–Q6
48 R–QR1 B–R3
49 R–B6 RxPch
50 K–B2 B–N2
51 R–B3 R–K7ch
52 K–Q1 R–KN7
Resigns

The following game, in which then world champion Petrosian was completely outplayed, ends up with some of the most brilliant combinations on record.

LARSEN PETROSIAN

Santa Monica, 1966

Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 N–KB3 N–QB3
3 P–Q4 PxP
4 NxP P–KN3
5 B–K3 B–N2
6 P–QB4 N–B3

Another Marcozy Bind.

7 N–QB3 N–KN5!

The standard liberating maneuver.

8 QxN NxN
9 Q–Q1 N–K3

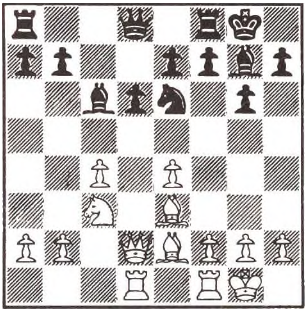
The Knight does not stand too well here; 9 . . . N–B3 in spite of the cramp is preferable.

10 Q–Q2 P–Q3
11 B–K2 B–Q2

This might well have been postponed until he is surer of what he wants.

12 O–O O–O
13 QR–Q1 B–QB3

With the obvious threat of . . . BxN and . . . BxKP.



14 N–Q5 R–K1

Petrosian is already finding his game difficult. If *14* . . . N–B4 *15* P–B3, with a powerful position.

15 P–B4

So that if now *15* . . . N–B4 *16* P–K5! or even *16* BxN PxB *17* P–K5, shutting out the Black KB.

15 . . . N–B2
16 P–KB5 N–R3

Black is unable to seize upon any constructive plan, and so he awaits more direct threats.

17 B–N4 N–B4
18 PxP RPxP
19 Q–KB2!

Attacking on the K-side already.

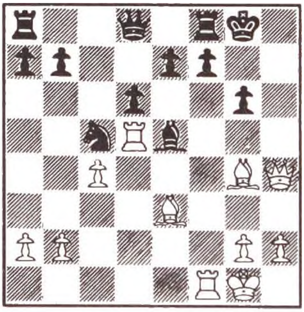
19 . . . R–KB1
20 P–K5!

Larsen wants to avoid the simplification 20 BxN PxB 21 QxP (winning the Queen with N–B6ch is no better) BxN and . . . Q–N3.

20 . . . BxP
21 Q–R4!

Threatening NxPch, as well as preparing to bring the Rooks up on the KR-file.

21 . . . BxN
22 RxB



22 . . . N–K3

White was threatening to win a piece. If instead 22 . . . P–K3 23 B–N5 P–B3 24 RxB! PxB 25 RxRch QxR 26 RxNP, with a winning attack.

23 R–B3 B–B3
24 Q–R6

Now the threat is R–R3 as well as BxN.

24 . . . B–N2
25 QxP!!

It is not everyday that one sacrifices the Queen against a world champion.

25 . . . N–B5

There is no defense. If 25 . . . PxQ 26 BxNch K–R1 27 R–R3ch B–R3 28 BxB and mate will soon follow.

26 RxN PxQ
27 B–K6ch R–B2

Desperation; 27 . . . K–R1 28 R–R4ch is the same.

28 RxR K–R1
29 R–KN5! P–N4
30 R–N3! Resigns

He is in an inescapable mating net.

Larry Evans

After World War II a number of new stars began to appear on the American chess scene. One of the most impressive was Larry Evans. Born in 1932, he reached master strength at the near-prodigy age of fifteen. In 1957, as a result of various international successes, he was awarded the title of international grandmaster by the FIDE.

In 1951 Evans won the U.S. Championship ahead of Reshevsky and all his other rivals. His career would have attracted more attention had he not been eclipsed by a greater name from America, the incomparable Bobby. Before Fischer, Evans had been the youngest who ever held the U.S. title.

With the increase in postwar chess activity, Evans became a professional. He writes a weekly syndicated column, which is widely distributed, and has published a number of books. For some time he was Fischer's second, only to be replaced later by Bill Lombardy.

Here is one of his best games from the first U.S. championship he won.

EVANS SANTASIERE

New York, 1951

Nimzo-Indian Defense

1	P–Q4	N–KB3
2	P–QB4	P–K3
3	N–QB3	B–N5
4	P–K3	P–QN3
5	N–K2	N–K5

A weak rejoinder. 5 . . . B–R3! is best.

6	P–B3	NxN
7	PxN	B–K2
8	N–N3	N–B3
9	P–K4	B–R3
10	B–Q3	N–R4
11	Q–K2	O–O
12	O–O	P–Q4

Again a poor idea. 12 . . . P–QB4 was best.

13	BPxP	BxB
14	QxB	PxP
15	N–B5	

To lure the Rook away from the KB-file.

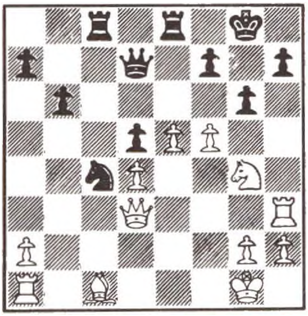
15	. . .	R–K1
16	P–K5	P–B4
17	P–KB4	Q–Q2
18	R–B3!	

White's attack commences.

18	. . .	B–B1
19	R–R3	

Threatening N–K7ch, which forces Black's reply.

19	. . .	P–N3
20	N–K3	PxP
21	PxP	QR–B1
22	P–B5	N–B5
23	N–N4	B–N2



24	RxP!!	

A beautiful combination.

24	. . .	KxR
25	Q–R3ch	K–N1
26	P–B6	QxN

Desperation. Relatively best was 26 . . . Q–R5 27 PxB Q–Q8ch 28 K–B2 QxPch 29 B–K3 Q–N7ch 30 K–N3 P–B4! 31 Q–R8ch K–B2 32 Q–R7! though White still wins.

27 QxQ	BxP
28 PxB	R–K8ch

He had hoped to get some counterplay with this, but the hope is illusory.

29 K–B2	QR–K1
30 P–KR4	R(K1)–K5
31 Q–N5	R(K5)–K7ch
32 K–N3	N–Q3
33 K–R2	N–K5
34 QxP	NxP
35 Q–Q8ch	N–K1
36 B–N2	RxR
37 BxR	P–B3
38 P–Q5	R–K5
39 P–Q6	RxPch
40 K–N3	R–K5
41 P–Q7	Resigns

Here is one of his most brilliant efforts, played when he was only fifteen.

EVANS PILNICK

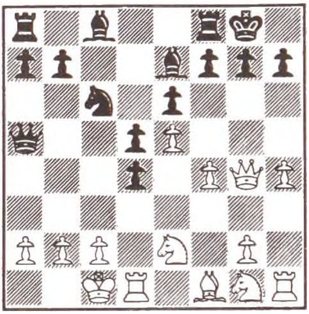
Marshall Chess Club Championship, 1947–48

French Defense

1 P–K4	P–K3
2 P–Q4	P–Q4
3 N–QB3	N–KB3
4 B–KN5	B–K2
5 BxN	BxB
6 P–K5	B–K2
7 Q–N4	

An enterprising, but risky sortie.

7 . . .	O–O
8 O–O–O	P–QB4
9 P–KR4	PxP
10 QN–K2	N–B3
11 P–KB4	Q–R4



Playing for the counterattack, which leads to a wild and woolly game.

12 K–N1	P–Q6!
13 PxP	B–Q2
14 R–R3	QR–B1

Somewhat reckless. 14 . . . P–B4 first seems in order.

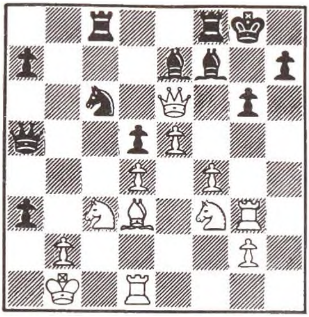
15 R–N3	P–KN3
16 P–Q4	P–QN4
17 P–R5	N–N5

The prelude to a hair-raising finish.

18 P–QR3	N–B3
19 PxP	BPxP
20 N–QB3!	P–N5
21 B–Q3!	B–K1
22 N–B3!!	PxP?

Missing his best bet: 22 . . . R–B4!. But for over-the-board play the combinations are almost beyond calculation.

23 QxKPch! **B–B2**



24 BxKNP!!! **PxP**

Such nonchalance! Yet the alternative 24 . . . BxQ 25 BxRP dbl ch is no better; e.g., 25 . . . K–R1 26 R–R1! RxP! 27 B–Q3 dis ch B–R5 28 NxB B–N5 29 N–N6ch K–N2 30 NxR with a winning attack.

25 BxRP dis ch **K–R1**
26 Q–R6 **Q–R8ch**

Black has only a few spite checks left.

27 K–B2 **P–N8=Qch**
28 RxQ **N–N5ch**
29 K–Q1 **Resigns**

Robert Byrne

After Fischer won the world title in 1972 came another American surprise: the splendid score of Robert Byrne, then U.S. champion, who qualified for the match-finals only to be defeated by Spassky. His outstanding result placed him tied for twelfth in the world hierarchy in 1973.

Born in 1928, Byrne, one of two master brothers, is a late bloomer. Although a high ranker in American tournaments for many years, it was not until the end of the sixties that he found his niche. After the death of Al Horowitz, Byrne took over the sprightly column in the *New York Times*, giving up his former position as a college professor. In addition to the column, he has written a number of books.

Here is one of his best games from the 1973 tournament. Although marred by a mistake on Black's part, Byrne handled his side perfectly; after all, one can only guarantee no mistakes on one's own part, not on the opponent's.

BYRNE RUKAVINA

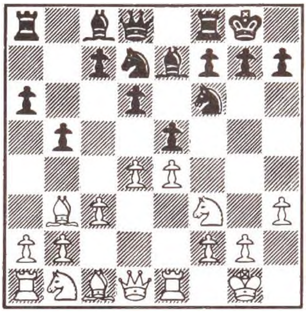
Leningrad, 1973
Ruy Lopez

1 P–K4 **P–K4**
2 N–KB3 **N–QB3**
3 B–N5 **P–QR3**
4 B–R4 **N–B3**
5 O–O **B–K2**
6 R–K1 **P–QN4**
7 B–N3 **P–Q3**
8 P–B3 **O–O**
9 P–KR3 **N–N1**

The Breyer variation, which has become the most popular defensive line in the Ruy Lopez, replacing the older 9 . . . N–QR4.

However, the older line is still quite adequate.

10 P–Q4 QN–Q2



11 N–R4!?

A surprising gambit line, first played in Simagin–Estrin, Moscow 1961. More usual is *11* P–QR4 B–N2 *12* B–B2 R–K1 *13* P–QN4, as in the tenth game of the 1972 match Fischer–Spassky; however Black can equalize here as well.

11 . . . R–K1

Declining the offer. After *11* . . . NxP *12* N–B5 N(K5)–B3 *13* Q–B3 R–N1 *14* B–N5, White has a powerful attack.

12 N–B5 B–B1

Threatening to uncover on the KP.

13 P–B3

If instead *13* Q–B3 B–QN2 *14* Q–N3 P–N3 *15* P–B3 (if *15* B–N5 BxP!) P–Q4! with strong counterplay.

13 . . . B–N2
14 B–N5 P–R3

Simpler was *14* . . . P–N3, and if *15* N–R6ch BxN *16* BxB P–Q4, with equality.

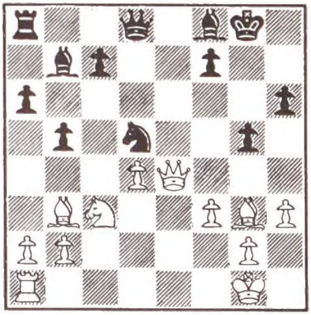
15 B–KR4 P–Q4?

But this is premature, saddling Black with weak pawns. Logical was *15* . . . P–N3 *16* N–K3 B–N2 and Black can extricate himself.

16 PxQP PxP
17 PxP P–N3
18 N–K3 N–N3
19 N–B3 P–N4?

But this weakens his K-position too much. Byrne recommended the alternative *19* . . . B–K2; however then *20* Q–Q2 preserves the initiative.

20 B–N3 N(B3)xP
21 N(K3)xN RxRch
22 QxR NxN
23 Q–K4



23 . . . NxN?

Overlooks the obvious check, but there was no good defense available. If 23 . . . P–QB3 24 NxN PxN 25 Q–Q3, and White should win because of the threat of B–QB2.

24 Q–N6ch B–N2
25 QxPch K–R1
26 PxN

With a healthy pawn ahead and the Black King still exposed, the rest is elementary. If here 26 . . . BxPch 27 PxB QxPch 28 K–R2 QxR 29 Q–K7 (but not 29 B–QB2 Q–N2 30 B–K5?? QxBch), and Black is helpless against the threat of B–K5.

26 . . . P–QN5
27 B–K5 BxB
28 PxB PxP
29 R–Q1 Q–KB1

There is no good resting place for the Queen. If 29 . . . Q–QB1 30 R–Q7.

30 QxP

And now there is no good place for the Bishop: if 30 . . . R–N1 31 R–Q7.

30 . . . R–B1

Desperation.

31 QxB P–B7
32 R–QB1 R–Q1
33 BxP Resigns

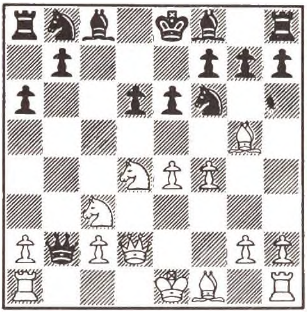
In this sparkling game Byrne sacrifices almost everything that he has yet comes out on top in the end.

BYRNE EVANS

U.S. Championship, 1965

Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 N–KB3 P–QR3
3 N–B3 P–Q3
4 P–Q4 PxP
5 NxP N–B3
6 B–N5 P–K3
7 P–B4 Q–N3
8 Q–Q2 QxP



The "Poisoned Pawn" variation, which was considered playable until Fischer was demolished in the eleventh game of his match with Spassky in 1972, which continued 9 N–N3 Q–R6 *10* BxN PxB *11* B–K2 P–KR4? *12* O–O N–B3 *13* K–R1 B–Q2 *14* N–N1!!, when Fischer went astray with *14* . . . Q–N5?. Correct was *14* . . . Q–N7, and if *15* P–QR4 P–B4. Other improvements have also been suggested for Black, and so the ultimate judgment on the variation is still open.

9 R–QN1 Q–R6
10 P–K5 PxP
11 PxP KN–Q2
12 B–QB4 B–N5?

Opens up the lines for a White attack. Best here is *12* . . . Q–B4, and it is not clear how White will proceed.

13 R–N3 Q–R4
14 O–O O–O

This defense has been extensively analyzed, and yet new lines keep on cropping up all the time. Possible now is *14* . . . NxP; if then *15* RxB QxR holds everything; and if *15* NxP PxN *16* RxB QN–B3 holds everything. But the lines are so complicated that every player fears prepared variations and accordingly plays it safe.

15 B–B6!?

An ingenious continuation. *15* NxP has been tried but is refuted by *15* . . . PxN *16* BxKPch K–R1 *17* RxRch BxR *18* Q–B4 N–QB3!, as in Tringov–Fischer, Havana 1965, when Black won handily.

15 . . . PxB?

Looks plausible but is brilliantly refuted. *15* . . . NxP still looks best; e.g., *16* RxB QxR *17* BxN QxB *18* Q–N5 P–B3 *19* RxP RxR *20* BxR Q–B2 and Black can hold.

16 Q–R6

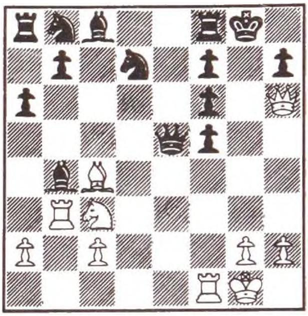
With a variety of threats.

16 . . . QxKP

Still looks plausible; how will White continue?

17 N–B5!! PxN

Forced.



18 N–K4!!

An entire piece down, he offers more!

18 . . . B–Q7

Black cannot afford to capture the Knight because of R–KR3.

19 NxB

Still threatening R–KR3.

19 . . . Q–Q5ch
20 K–R1 N–K4

So that if now *21* R–KR3 R–Q1 and the Black King can sneak away on the checks.

21 R–N3ch N–N5

And now the Rook may not leave the KN-file because the White Queen is *en prise*.

22 P–KR3 Q–K4

If instead 22 . . . B–K3 23 PxN P–B5 24 R–KR3 R–Q1 25 B–Q3 P–B4 26 PxP and wins. There is a tendency to forget that after all the sacrifices White is only a piece behind.

23	R–B4	Q–K8ch
24	N–B1	

Now Black must give up his Queen to ward off PxN and the opening up of the KN-file.

24	. . .	QxR
25	RxNch	QxR
26	PxQ	N–Q2

Black has managed to salvage two Rooks for the Queen, but he is still in a mating net.

27	N–N3	K–R1
28	B–Q3	R–KN1
29	BxP	R–N3

Forced; if 29 . . . N–B1 30 QxBPch R–N2 31 N–R5.

30	BxR	PxB
31	N–K4	

If Black could develop his Q-side he might still have a chance; so White does not give him that chance.

31	. . .	P–QN4
32	P–N5!	B–N2

Naturally 32 . . . P–B4 33 N–B6 is no better.

33	NxP	N–B1
34	Q–R2!	B–B1

There is nothing to be done against Q–K5.

35	Q–K5	N–K3
36	N–Q7 dis ch	Resigns

On 36 . . . N–N2 37 N–N6 wins another piece.

Arthur Bisguier

International grandmaster since 1957, Bisguier has been a worthy representative of the U.S. on many occasions. He was U.S. champion from 1954 to 1958. In his style he loves wild and woolly positions in which his penchant for "sacking" pieces can be gratified. Here is a sparkler against the great Dane Larsen.

BISGUIER LARSEN

Zagreb, 1965

Pirc-Robatsch Defense

1	P–Q4	P–KN3

The revival of this antipositional defense has been one of the surprises of post-World War II chess. Despite its seeming inadequacy, it is hard to refute.

2	P–K4	B–N2
3	P–KB4	P–Q3
4	N–KB3	N–KB3?

Inconsistent; he must counterattack with . . . P–B4.

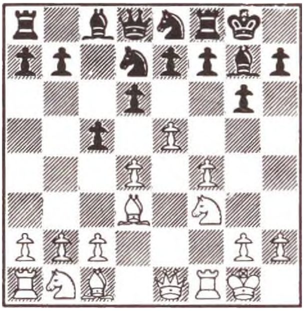
5 B–Q3 O–O
6 O–O QN–Q2

Larsen's play is too passive and meets with a drastic refutation.

7 P–K5 N–K1
8 Q–K1

Straight to the K-side attack.

8 . . . P–QB4



9 P–B5!

For now White has this powerful thrust.

9 . . . PxKP
***10* PxNP RPxP**

It was too dangerous to open the diagonal to the White KB with *10* . . . BPxP.

***11* Q–R4! KPxP**
***12* B–KR6 N(K1)–B3**
***13* N–N5**

Bisguier has a classic attacking position against the weakened enemy King; there is no real defense, in spite of the two extra pawns Black has.

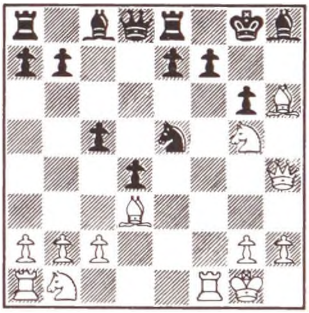
***13* . . . N–K4**

On other moves White continues with N–Q2–K4.

***14* RxN! B–R1!**

Anyhow, a subtle defense. If *14* . . . BxR *15* B–N7!!! and Black is mated in all variations, whereas if now *15* B–N7? KxB *16* R–B1 P–B4 and he might still escape.

***15* R–B1 R–K1**



Now it looks as though Black may even get out, with . . . P–B4.

***16* B–B8!!!**

It is not to be: if *16* . . . RxB *17* Q–R7 mate, and if *16* . . . KxB *17* QxB mate, and finally if *16* . . . P–K3 *17* B–K7!!! QxB *18* Q–R7ch K–B1 *19* QxB mate.

***16* . . . B–B3**
***17* RxB PxR**
***18* Q–R6! RxB**
***19* Q–R7 mate**

William Lombardy

Bill Lombardy has two exceptional firsts to his credit: he was the first American to win the World Junior Championship, in 1957, in a period when all the new names seemed to be Russian, and he is the first Catholic priest since Ruy Lopez to become a grandmaster. Born in 1937 he acquired the grandmaster title in 1960. By profession a high school teacher, he cannot devote so much time to chess as he would like yet always acquits himself creditably when he plays. Here is a sparkler from the Olympiad at Nice in 1974, when the U.S. team, without Fischer, finished a good third, behind the U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia.

LOMBARDY ENKLAAR

Nice, 1973

Sicilian Defense

1	P–K4	P–QB4
2	N–KB3	P–K3
3	P–Q4	PxP
4	NxP	N–KB3
5	N–QB3	P–Q3
6	P–KN4!	

A good alternative to the more usual B–KN5. It was played in the Byrne–Spassky match in 1974, when White got a small advantage, though Black held the draw.

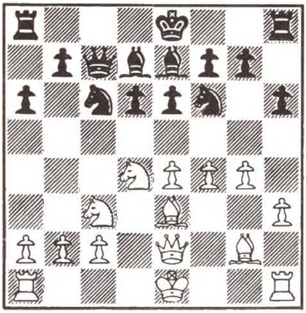
6 . . . P–KR3

Safest.

7	B–N2	N–B3
8	P–KR3	B–Q2
9	B–K3	B–K2

Since Black obviously does not intend to castle on the K-side, the order of moves he chooses is imprecise. 9 . . . P–QR3 followed by . . . Q–B2 and . . . O–O–O was preferable.

10	Q–K2	P–QR3
11	P–B4	Q–B2



12 Q–B2!

Preventing castling, because of NxN followed by B–N6.

12 . . . NxN

An attempt to free himself. Black has been completely outplayed in the opening.

13 BxN P–K4

What else? He cannot castle on either side, so he has to try a break in the center; it does not work out.

14 B–K3 P–QN4
15 P–N5

Taking advantage of the hole created by Black's freeing maneuver.

15 . . . RPxP

Preferable at least was 15 . . . PxBP 16 BxP PxP 17 BxNP B–B3, with more air than in the game.

16 PxNP N–N1
17 N–Q5 Q–N2
18 O–O–O

White's position is overwhelming.

18 . . . B–K3
19 P–KR4 B–Q1

Still trying to develop.

20 P–R5 N–K2
21 P–R6

First fruit: either the Rook file or a passed pawn.

21 . . . BxN
22 PxB PxP
23 RxP N–N3
24 B–K4!

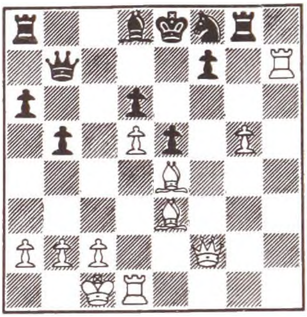
Attacking the pillar of Black's defense.

24 . . . R–KN1
25 R–R7

Lombardy is already threatening to win with R–KB1, followed by BxN.

25 . . . N–B1

Seemingly forcing the Rook to withdraw, but he has better in mind.



26 P–N6!!

Wins in all variations.

26 . . . RxP

There is little choice. If 26 . . . NxR 27 PxN R–R1 28 B–R6 Q–K2 29 R–B1 B–B2 30 Q–B5 is decisive.

27 BxR NxB
28 Q–B5

White is the exchange ahead for a pawn, but there are a few technical problems; Lombardy disposes of these handily.

28 . . . N–B1

The threat was QxN.

29 R–R8 B–K2
30 B–R6 Q–Q2
31 QxQch

Gains a tempo over R–B1 immediately.

31 . . . KxQ
32 R-B1 K-K1
33 R-N1

Now he threatens to win a piece with R(N1)-N8.

33 . . . P-B4
34 BxN BxB
35 R-N5!

The point.

35 . . . P-B5

Loses a piece, but the game was gone anyhow. If 35 . . . K-B2 36 RxPch K-N2 37 R(B5)-R5 Black dies a lingering death.

36 R-B5 K-K2
37 R-R7ch K-K1
38 RxBch Resigns

George Kramer

After winning the strong New York State Championship at the age of sixteen, George Kramer seemed destined for great things in American chess. But the needs of his profession as a chemist have been too demanding. Always a dangerous opponent, he has not played much after the early years. Here is one of his most beautiful games.

KRAMER DREXEL

U.S. Championship
New York, 1946
Reti Opening

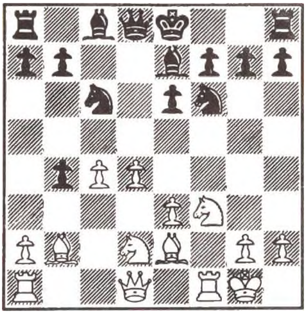
1 N-KB3 P-Q4
2 P-B4 P-Q5

One of many good replies.

3 P-K3 P-QB4
4 P-QN4 PxKP?

But this is weak. 4 . . . P-B3 is called for.

5 BPxP PxP
6 B-K2 N-KB3
7 O-O N-B3
8 B-N2 P-K3
9 P-Q4 B-K2
10 QN-Q2



As compensation for his pawn White is extremely well developed and has a powerful pawn center—more than enough.

10 . . . N-N5?

Perchance you wonder at this play—well, wonder on. . . .

11 Q-N3 P-B4

Consistent. His main aim is to break the strength of P–K4. He does not succeed.

12 **P–K4!** **PxP**
13 **NxP** **O–O**

All of White's pieces are now poised for the attack; Kramer presses his advantage home in a manner which any grandmaster could be proud of.

14 **Q–Q3!**

Threatening P–Q5–Q6 at an opportune moment and preparing to shift his KB.

14 . . . **N–B3**
15 **N–N3** **Q–N3**

Hoping to play . . . P–K4 . . .

16 **K–R1**

. . . which is promptly stopped.

16 . . . **Q–R4**

It would be pointless to criticize Black's defense; anything else would have turned out equally badly. We ought rather to be grateful that he played in such a way as to stimulate Kramer's imaginative powers.

17 **B–Q1!** **B–Q2**
18 **P–Q5!** **PxP**
19 **PxP** **N–N1**

Sad necessity. *19* . . . NxP is neatly refuted by the in-between move *20* B–B2! P–KN3 *21* B–N3 B–K3 *22* Q–K4 B–B2 *23* N–K5 N–B3 *24* **NxB!!** NxQ *25* N–R6 mate!

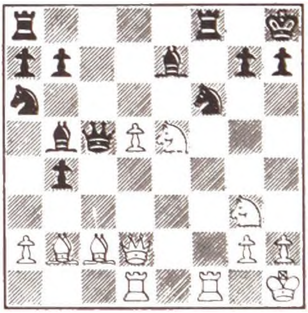
20 **B–B2** **Q–N4**

Where there are moves there is hope. The obvious *20* . . . B–N4 is best met by *21* Q–K3 BxR *22* QxB B–B5 *23* N–K5 BxQP *24* N–B5 B–B2 *25* B–N3 with a mating attack.

21 **Q–Q4** **Q–B4**
22 **Q–Q2** **K–R1**
23 **QR–Q1** **N–R3**
24 **N–K5!**

Threatening RxN.

24 . . . **B–N4**



25 **N–B5!!**

The first of a series of dazzling combinations.

25 . . . **BxR**
26 **Q–N5!**

To begin with, a slight threat of mate.

26 . . . **N–R4**

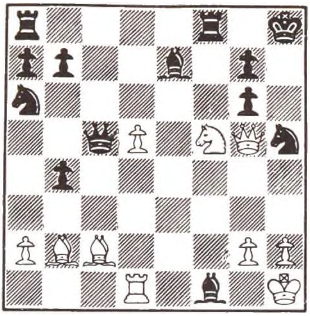
26 . . . R–KN1 is smothered by 27 N–B7 mate.

27 **N–N6ch!!**

From now on every White move is a check.

27 . . . PxN

Or 27 . . . K–N1 28 NxBch.



28 BxPch!!

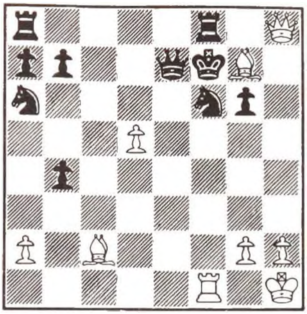
The real point, which White had to foresee on his twenty-fifth move. On 28 QxP BxPch! gives Black a breathing spell.

28 . . . K–R2

Or 28 . . . K–N1 29 N–R6ch KxB 30 QxPch and mate next.

29 Q–R6ch K–N1
30 NxBch QxN
31 Q–R8ch K–B2
32 RxBch N–B3

It looks as though Black, who is a Rook ahead, is escaping.



33 BxPch!!!

The last sacrifice, and the deciding one.

33 . . . KxB
34 Q–R6ch K–B2
35 RxNch K–K1
36 RxRch K–Q2
37 Q–K6ch!

Black was threatening mate!

37 . . . QxQ
38 PxQch KxP
39 RxR Resigns

Pal Benko

Political events have always created new masters for many countries. The fortunes of World War I made Alekhine a Frenchman, Bogolyubov a German, Nimzovich a Dane, and Reshevsky an American. World War II saw Flohr and Keres become Russians, Najdorf an Argentinian, and Bogatyrtschuk a Canadian. America gained by incorporating the Hungarian Benko, the Czech Kavalek, and the Australian Walter Browne.

Benko, born in 1928, was a member of the Hungarian Olympic team in 1956. Shortly thereafter, in the wake of the Hungarian revolution of that year, he succeeded in escaping to the U.S., where he has made his home ever since. Awarded the international grandmaster title in 1958, his best result was in 1962, when he reached the Candidates' Tournament in Curaçao. In addition to over-the-board expertise, Benko is also a talented problem composer. His column, "Benko's Bafflers," is one of the most popular in *Chess Life & Review*.

In opening theory he has contributed a significant new gambit, appropriately called the Benko Gambit, which as yet has met with no serious refutation. Here is one of his most lively games with this variation.

VUKIC BENKO

Sarajevo, 1967
Benko Gambit

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–B4

The Benoni Defense Deferred, which has become quite popular in recent years. There is no clear way in which White can get an advantage.

3 P–Q5

I have always felt that the possibilities of 3 PxP have been insufficiently explored.

3 . . . P–QN4!?

This is the Benko Gambit. Black offers a pawn for superior development.

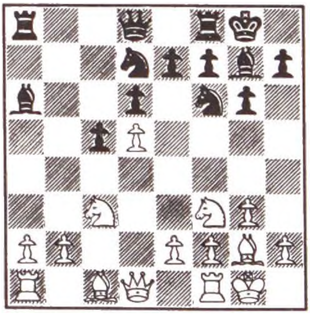
4 PxP P–QR3
5 PxP

The usual continuation. An alternative try occurred in Portisch–Benko, Palma de Majorca 1971, which continued 5 P–K3 P–N3 6 N–QB3 P–Q3 7 N–B3 B–KN2 8 PxP O–O 9 P–K4 Q–R4 and was eventually drawn.

5 . . . BxP
6 N–QB3 P–Q3
7 N–B3 P–N3
8 P–KN3

8 P–K4 BxB 9 KxB has also been tried, without any appreciable success. It is hard to press home the advantage of the extra pawn.

8 . . . B–KN2
9 B–N2 O–O
10 O–O QN–Q2



An examination of the position shows that Black has commanding posts for all his pieces, while White has a hard time reaching any coordinated action or building up a useful plan. Nonetheless he does have an extra pawn. So the battle is joined: mind over matter.

11 Q–B2

Preparing to release the Rook and advance the KP. Another possibility is to advance on the K-side with P–KR3, K–R2, N–K1, P–B4, R–B2, and P–K4.

11 . . . Q–N3

Benko writes that he cannot make up his mind about the best square for the Queen.

12 R–Q1 KR–N1
13 R–N1 N–K1

Zeroing in on the weakened Q-side.

14 B–N5 Q–Q1!

Necessary, yet strong.

15 B–KB1 P–R3
16 B–Q2 N–B2
17 P–N3 N–N3
18 P–K4 BxB
19 KxB Q–Q2

This is the kind of position that Benko likes to reach. Compensation for the pawn is found in the freer range of his pieces.

20 R–K1

An obscure move; 20 K–N2 and advance on the K-side made more sense.

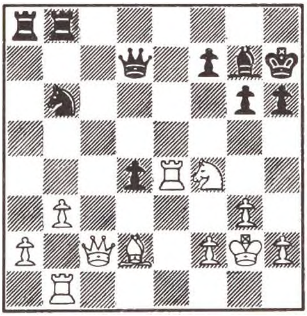
20 . . . K–R2

The check at R6 did not mean anything.

21 K–N2 P–K3
22 PxP NxP
23 N–K2

Again an obscure retreat. Naturally 23 N–Q5 could not be played because of 23 . . . NxN 24 PxN N–B2, regaining the pawn. Still he could have played 23 QR–Q1 first, then B–B1, and then N–Q5.

23 . . . P–Q4
24 N–B4 PxP
25 RxP N–Q5!
26 NxN PxN



27 P–QR4

This loses a pawn, but the game was already difficult. For example, 27 N–Q3 R–QB1 28

Q–N2 Q–B3 29 P–B3 Q–B7 is decisive for Black, who regains the pawn (threat: . . . RxRP) with an overwhelming game.

27 . . . **Q–N2!**

Threatening the Rook (. . . P–B4) and thereby winning back the gambit pawn. The rest is easy.

28 P–B3 **NxP**
29 QR–K1

Desperation; he offers another pawn for the sake of a dubious attack. On 29 N–Q3 N–B6 is very powerful.

29 . . . **QxP**
30 QxQ **RxQ**
31 R–K7

His last hope.

31 . . . **R–N7**

Which is promptly thwarted.

32 R(K1)–K2 **N–B6**

The most direct. 32 . . . K–N1 is also good enough.

33 BxN **PxB**
34 RxP **R(R1)–R7**

There are many ways to win; that is, all except 34 . . . P–N4 35 N–R5 RxRch 36 K–R3 K–N3 37 RxBch KxN?? 38 P–N4 mate.

35 K–B1 **P–N4**
36 RxBch

Sheer desperation (as contrasted with simple desperation). On 36 R(K2)–K7 R–N8ch is decisive.

36 . . . **KxR**
37 N–K6ch **K–B3**
38 N–Q4 **RxR**
39 NxR **R–R8ch**
Resigns

Fridrik Olafsson

Although chess has a long tradition there, the Scandinavian countries have produced few masters of international caliber. Perhaps the strongest ever came along in the 1950s, the Icelander Fridrik Olafsson, who is also the first grandmaster to come out of Iceland. It may be recalled that Iceland's capital Reykjavik achieved chess immortality by hosting the Fischer–Spassky battle in 1972.

Born in 1935, Olafsson became a grandmaster in 1958. In the period 1955–1965, he was quite active internationally. His best result was to reach the Candidates' Tournament in the world championship ladder in 1959. After some years on the international circuit he returned to his profession.

In the following game Olafsson surprises none other than Bobby with a daring sacrifice of the exchange, which finally prevails.

OLAFSSON — FISCHER

Portoroz, 1958

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 P-QB4 N-KB3
2 N-QB3 P-K3
3 N-B3 P-Q4
4 P-Q4 B-N5

The Manhattan variation, after the international tournament at New York 1927 (Manhattan Chess Club), where it was played quite a bit. Some theoreticians have tried to rename this the Ragosin variation, which creates nothing but confusion.

5 PxP PxP
6 B-N5 P-KR3
7 B-R4 P-B4

The normal break.

8 P-K3

The alternative 8 PxP can be tried.

8 . . . N-B3
9 R-B1 P-B5

The line favored in the 1927 tournament (Spielmann-Capablanca, New York 1927). However, Black has a more aggressive alternative in 9 . . . P-KN4 10 B-N3 N-K5.

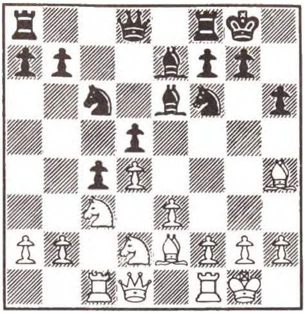
10 B-K2 B-K3

Overprotecting the center, since the danger is that his pawns will be split.

11 O-O O-O
12 N-Q2

Threatening BxN and P-K4, among other things.

12 . . . B-K2



13 P-QN3!

The logical break, which leads to the following exchange sacrifice.

13 . . . P-KN4?

Gives Olafsson his chance; a better defense was 13 . . . B-QR6, and if 14 R-B2 N-QN5, or 14 R-N1 Q-R4, with a satisfactory game.

14 B-N3 B-QR6
15 R-B2! N-N5

There is nothing better than to accept the sacrifice.

16 PxP NxR
17 QxN PxP?

Overlooks the powerful reply. A better defense was 17 . . . B-Q3, which keeps his K-position intact.

18 N-N5!

The ingenious point: the real threat is N–B7 and NxB, opening up the Black King.

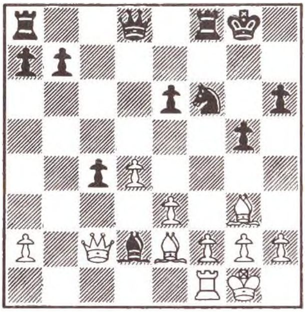
18 . . . B–QN5

The best chance.

19 N–B7 BxN
20 NxB!

White can play 20 NxR B–R4 21 Q–R4 and perhaps hold on to his advantage, but the text is much stronger.

20 . . . PxN



21 BxP!!

Naturally playing for a win. On 21 Q–N6ch K–R1 he has a draw with QxRPch and Q–N6ch but no more. Now the Bishop may not save himself because of the mate threat.

21 . . . Q–K1

Heading for a simplification, which however does him no good.

22 QxB N–K5
23 Q–Q3 NxB
24 RPxN

Time to recapitulate: White has only one pawn for the exchange, ordinarily not enough, but the Black position is so weakened and exposed that more material gain will follow.

24 . . . R–B3
25 Q–K4 R–QB1
26 B–N3

With all kinds of threats; e.g., 26 . . . P–N4 27 Q–K5 Q–K2 28 P–B4 and Black remains uncomfortable.

26 . . . Q–Q2
27 R–Q1

To play P–Q5, which would have a devastating effect.

27 . . . R–K1

So that if 28 P–Q5 P–K4 will block the game.

28 P–B4!

Preventing the defense.

28 . . . Q–R2

What else?

29 Q–K5 Q–B4

Really desperation; there is nothing to be done.

30 P–N4

Equally strong is 30 P–K4 QxQ 31 QPxQ R–B2 32 P–B5, for if 32 . . . PxP 33 R–Q7 wins.

30 . . . QxQ
31 QPxQ R–B2
32 P–B5

Winning another pawn, without any loss of initiative.

32 . . .	R–B2
33 R–Q6	

Of course not 33 BxPch?? RxB 34 PxR K–B1 and White's tripled pawn is not enough of an advantage.

33 . . .	R–B4
34 BxPch	K–B1
35 B–N3	R(B4)xP
36 RxP	RxKP
37 R–KN6	

Again a little care is needed: if 37 P–B6 R(K1)–K3 once more blunts the attack.

37 . . .	R(K1)–K4
38 RxP	R–N6
39 R–N8ch	

Equally decisive is 39 K–B2. Bobby does not like to resign, but then again, who does?

39 . . .	K–K2
40 K–R2	R–QB6
41 B–K6	R–K7
42 P–N5	R(B6)–B7
43 B–Q5	K–Q3
44 B–B3	Resigns

11.

The Age of the Soviet Champions

Following the victory of Botvinnik in the World Championship Tournament of 1948, his major rivals continued for a long time to be new Soviet grandmasters. One after another challenged him, only to be defeated or, like Smyslov and Tal, to be victorious and then lose the return. In the meantime other Soviet grandmasters came on the scene throughout the 1940s and 1950s; it was almost as though there were a new star every year. After the matches with the U.S. in 1945 and 1946, it was clear that the Soviets had the strongest players in the world. In 1952 they entered a team in the Olympiads for the first time. They took first prize and have captured first prize in every succeeding tournament. In 1970 they organized a match of the Soviet Union against the rest of the world, which they won by the odd point (20½ to 19½) when Portisch, (!) in the last round, "suddenly" blew a won game against his Soviet opponent after he had been hurriedly called out to a consultation with the Hungarian ambassador. In men's individual play they remained on top until Fischer trounced everybody in 1971–1972. Even without the major title however, they clearly have the largest reservoir of first-class grandmasters in the world.

In part this is a continuation of the trend toward Russian chess which started at the beginning of this century. The Soviets themselves admit this when they rank Alekhine as "Russia's greatest player" (a surprising admission in itself). In part it is due to the excellent playing conditions and substantial rewards offered to the chess master in the Soviet Union. After Botvinnik all the top experts have been full-time professionals, though for some strange reason this fact has been camouflaged by the Soviet press. And even Botvinnik was able to take as much as a year off from his regular post with full pay in order to do his best in a chess tournament. Chess is viewed as an art, and a number of the top stars, from Botvinnik on, have been decorated as honored artists of the Soviet Union; Botvinnik himself even received the Order of Lenin.

In contrast, the life of the chess master in Europe and the U.S. has remained rather precarious. Even the U.S., when, after Fischer's victory in 1972, a lot of money was suddenly available for chess, could not finance a single full-time professional who lived on his chess earnings, as other sports figures do. The U.S. Chess Federation continued to neglect the growth of the professional chess master, as it had in the past. Perhaps in the future this may change.

Nevertheless, and paradoxically, after the 1950s the major new names have come from non-Soviet countries: above all the American Fischer, but also the Brazilian Mecking, who won his country's championship at 13, the Hungarian Portisch, the Czechs Hort, Smejkal, and Kavalek, the Australian Browne, and many others. In fact, the major new Soviet figure in world chess since 1960 has been Anatoly Karpov, who has however become world champion.

After the 1948 tournament, international chess was regulated on a better basis than heretofore by the FIDE (International Chess Federation), led for many years by ex-world champion Max Euwe, who had retired from active play. A careful ranking system results in a ladder on which an aspirant from any country may climb as high as his ability warrants. While this has not eliminated politics from chess—what could in this world atmosphere—it has at least reduced it considerably. Without the pressure of world public opinion Fischer could never have put through his match with Spassky in 1972. It can be expected that world opinion will play some role in future decisions as well.

Tigran Petrosian

The man who finally dethroned Botvinnik was Tigran Petrosian, a native of Soviet Georgia. Born in 1929, he became an international grandmaster in 1952. Prior to that he had attracted attention even as a youngster when he beat Flohr in a simultaneous exhibition at the age of thirteen. Soon he established himself as a solid defensive master, one who rarely lost, though he did not win so often as he wanted to. In three Soviet championships, 1954, 1955, and 1958, he did not lose a single game. Then he won the Soviet championship in 1959 and again in 1961. This was followed by his victory in the Candidates' Tournament in 1962 and defeat of Botvinnik in 1963. Though his tournament successes as world champion were not outstanding, he did defeat Spassky in the title match in 1966, only to lose to the same master three years later. Since 1969 his play has fallen off somewhat, much as it has for other Soviet champions after they lose the title. In 1971 he was badly defeated by Fischer, and in 1974 he withdrew from the qualifying match with Korchnoi because of illness.

In the preface to the Wildhagen collection of his games, issued in 1962, Petrosian wrote:

> The games published here represent a substantial part of the results which I have achieved at the chess board.
>
> The first game was played when I was 13. In the 18 years in which I have been playing tournaments, I have had to compete with a wide variety of opponents in many tournaments. It is therefore only natural that I have had to adopt the most varied methods available in chess to meet the numerous individual peculiarities of my opponents.
>
> I was forced to attack cunningly, to play brief games, and on the other hand to hold off the pressure of my opponents. This naturally could not be done without occasional gross blunders. One of them, in my game with Bronstein from the Candidates' Tournament of 1956 in Amsterdam, worried me a lot. For if I had not blundered so badly, this would probably have become the best game I had played up to that time.
>
> This collection of games has been put together to present a view of myself and my attitude to chess. Positional play is my favorite strategy; even where I managed to secure a tactical success by a combination, such a result was only the consequence of careful strategic preparation.
>
> There are of course exceptions, as in my game against Keres in the Candidates' Tournament of 1959. But my strength lies in position play. It is my deep conviction that the understanding of position play is the basis on which one can judge the merits of a player.

In the following game Petrosian's positional skill is amply demonstrated, as he punishes an early error by Bobby Fischer.

PETROSIAN **FISCHER**

Candidates' Tournament World Championship, 1959

Nimzo-Indian Defense

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 N–QB3 B–N5
4 P–K3

The Rubinstein Line, most popular nowadays.

4 . . . P–Q4
5 P–QR3

Botvinnik's preferred continuation, which has earned him many an important point (see p. 271).

5 . . . B–Q3??

A positional blunder; why Bobby adopted it is unclear, since there is not even a trap behind it.

6 N–B3?

Perhaps fearing some prepared variation; 6 P–B5 is obvious and correct.

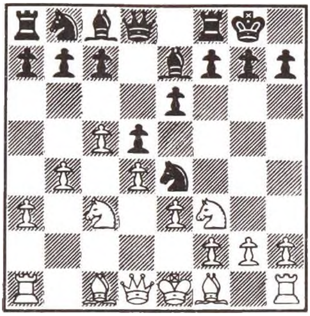
6 . . . O–O

Still challenging him. Here 6 . . . P–B4 leads to theoretical equality.

7 P–B5

Of course.

7 . . . B–K2
8 P–QN4 N–K5



Seeking counterplay, which is easily met.

9 B–N2 N–Q2

Freeing attempts, such as 9 . . . P–QR4, would be met by P–N5. No doubt the best try here is 9 . . . P–QN3 and then . . . P–QR4.

10 B–Q3

Again developing with tempo.

10 . . . P–B4
11 N–K2!

Keeps Black cramped.

11 . . . B–B3
12 O–O Q–K2

Obviously hoping for . . . P–K4.

13 N–K5

Which hope is promptly squelched.

13 . . . NxN

It is not clear how Black can build up any meaningful plan; so he tries to get some fresh air.

14 PxN B–N4
15 B–Q4!

Immediately threatening to win a piece with P–B3 but also preparing other ideas on the Q-side.

15 . . . B–R3
16 P–B3 N–N4
17 P–B6!

With this move, which is virtually decisive, White locks the Q-side, condemning the Black QB to a life of useless inactivity.

17 . . . P–QN3

The sacrifice of the exchange with 17 . . . PxP 18 B–B5 hardly offers any real hope.

18 P–N5 P–R3
19 P–QR4 PxP
20 PxP RxR
21 QxR N–B2
22 Q–B3

Preparing to bring the Rook in. White's game virtually plays itself, while Black stumbles around not knowing what to do.

22 . . . Q–R5

Threatening lots of nothing.

23 R–R1 N–N4

Now he does have a threat: . . . N–K5, and if PxN BPxP with mating possibilities on the KB-file. So . . .

24 Q–K1!

Avoids complications; the ending would obviously be an easy win.

24 . . .	**Q–R4**
25 R–R7	**Q–N3**

Bobby has to resort to obvious traps, but if 25 . . . R–B2 26 N–B4 wins a piece.

26 K–R1	**Q–R4**
27 P–B4	

Again avoiding needless complications after 27 RxP NxP.

27 . . .	**N–K5**
28 RxP	**P–N4**
29 BxP	**K–R1**
30 BxN	**BPxB**
31 B–B5	**R–N1** and resigns

The following game, typical of Petrosian at his best, must have had a shattering effect on Botvinnik. The younger master is content to let Black equalize in the opening only to seize upon an almost insignificant error a few moves later to produce a won endgame, when is then handled with technical perfection.

PETROSIAN BOTVINNIK

5th Game, World Championship Match, 1963

Gruenfeld Defense

1 P–QB4	**P–KN3**
2 P–Q4	**N–KB3**
3 N–QB3	**P–Q4**
4 N–B3	**B–N2**
5 P–K3	

A harmless variation, but Petrosian typically does not try to get an advantage out of the opening.

5 . . .	**O–O**

5 . . . P–B4 can also be played at once, but there is no hurry.

6 B–K2	**PxP**

A slight inaccuracy. Here 6 . . . P–B4 is much better: if then 7 QPxP Q–R4 8 B–Q2 PxP 9 BxP QxBP, with a superior position.

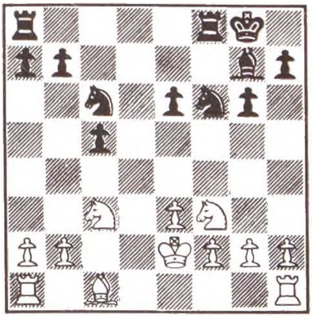
7 BxP	**P–B4**
8 P–Q5!	

For now White has this excellent resource, which was not available before.

8 . . .	**P–K3**
9 PxP	

Unavoidable: if 9 P–K4? PxP 10 PxP R–K1ch with advantage.

9 . . .	**QxQch**
10 KxQ	**BxP**
11 BxB	**PxB**
12 K–K2	**N–B3**



The position looks so even now that many masters might agree to a draw at this point. Not so Petrosian: he rightly senses that the Black pawn at K3 offers him some chances and waits for Botvinnik to grow careless, which the latter surprisingly does.

13 R–Q1 QR–Q1

Not exactly a mistake, but not the most accurate. The opposition on the Q-file can wait; more urgent was the centralization of the King with . . . K–B2.

14 RxR RxR

Had he evaluated White's reply more carefully, he might well have responded with *14* . . . NxR.

15 N–KN5!!

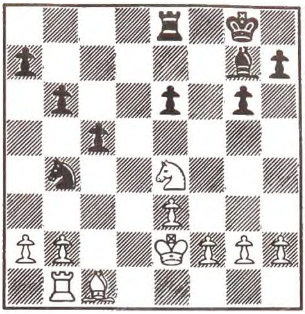
A surprisingly strong continuation. If *15* . . . P–K4 *16* N–K6 wins a pawn; so the reply is forced.

15 . . . R–K1
16 N(N5)–K4 NxN
17 NxN P–N3
18 R–N1

To develop his Bishop. He must have had the following positional combination in mind, since Botvinnik notoriously dislikes passive defense.

18 . . . N–N5?

A slight error which unexpectedly leads to a deterioration of his position.



19 B–Q2!

If this were poker, we would say Petrosian is calling Botvinnik's bluff: if *19* . . . NxP *20* R–R1 N–N5 *21* BxN PxB *22* RxP BxP *23* R–N7 with a much stronger endgame, though whether it is sufficient to win is not entirely clear.

19 . . . N–Q4

The Knight is not placed too well here. He should have admitted his error and simply retreated to B3.

20 P–QR4 R–QB1

None of Botvinnik's moves is exactly wrong; yet he somehow drifts into a lost ending. Centralization with *20* . . . K–B1 and . . . K–K2 seems preferable.

21 P–QN3!

Preventing . . . P–B5?, which would be met by N–Q6, winning a pawn.

21 . . . B–B1
22 R–QB1 B–K2

If 22 . . . R–B2 to prevent P–QN4, White again has 23 N–N5!.

23 P–QN4!

Finally creates a weakness in Black's pawn structure.

23 . . . P–B5?

Since this pawn creates so much trouble by being artificially isolated, 23 . . . K–B2 seems more prudent.

24 P–N5! K–B2
25 B–B3 B–R6
26 R–B2 NxBch

If instead 26 . . . P–KR3 27 N–Q2 and Black will be hard put to defend the BP.

27 RxN B–N5
28 R–B2 K–K2
29 N–Q2! P–B6

Black is in trouble. If 29 . . . BxN 30 KxB K–Q3 31 K–B3 K–B4 32 R–Q2 followed by R–Q4 wins for White.

30 N–K4

Now he is threatening to win the pawn with K–Q3.

30 . . . B–R4
31 K–Q3 R–Q1ch
32 K–B4 R–Q8

Desperation; on 32 . . . R–Q7 33 K–N3! is decisive.

33 NxP R–KR8

Some commentators have suggested that 33 . . . BxN offered better chances, but after 34 KxB R–KR8 35 P–R3 K–Q2 36 P–B3 White should win in the long run.

34 N–K4!

Gives back the pawn for a decisive attack.

34 . . . RxP
35 K–Q4 K–Q2
36 P–N3 B–N5
37 K–K5!

The King now becomes the most active piece.

37 . . . R–R4ch
38 K–B6 B–K2ch
39 K–N7! P–K4

It is amazing how difficult it is to find a good move for Black against the all-encompassing King. If 39 . . . P–N4 40 K–B7! is a possible response and the Bishop must move.

40 R–B6

Petrosian now embarks on a mating attack!!!

40 . . . R–R8
41 K–B7

Threatening R–K6!. Really a most original position: it looks more like a composition than an actual ending.

41 . . . R–R8
42 R–K6 B–Q1

Again the Bishop finds it hard to locate a good spot. One amusing variation is 42 . . . B–N5 43 N–B6ch K–B1 (forced) 44 RxP RxP 45 R–K4 and the Bishop is caught.

43 R–Q6ch K–B1
44 K–K8! B–B2
45 R–QB6 R–Q8

Gives up the hunt. If instead 45 . . . RxP 46 N–B3 and wins the Bishop with N–Q5.

46 N–N5 R–Q1ch
47 K–B7! R–Q2ch
48 K–N8! Resigns

The Black pawns fall apart. A most extraordinary royal trip!

Almost every leading grandmaster of our epoch has had to fend off an attack by Tal, perhaps the greatest combinative genius of the century. Here, as so often, Tal goes too far and is punished by Petrosian in a great game.

TAL **PETROSIAN**

Moscow, 1973

Caro-Kann Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB3

Tal was particularly successful against the Caro-Kann in his matches with Botvinnik; so Petrosian's adoption of this defense has a challenging character.

2 P–Q4 P–Q4
3 N–QB3 PxP
4 NxP N–Q2

Conservative. In the Tal–Botvinnik games the usual line was 4 . . . B–B4 5 N–N3 B–N3 6 KN–K2 P–K3 7 P–KR4 P–KR3 8 N–B4, with a strong initiative for White.

5 B–QB4 KN–B3
6 N–N5!?

First surprise: Tal plays sharply for the attack. More usual is 6 NxNch NxN, when White has a slight edge but scarcely enough to be important. The aggressive line chosen is more suited to Tal's temperament.

6 . . . P–K3
7 Q–K2

Threatening 8 BxP.

7 . . . N–N3
8 B–N3 P–QR4

The QP is immune to capture: if 8 . . . QxP? 9 KN–B5 threatening N–K5, and if in reply 9 . . . B–N5ch? 10 P–B3 BxPch 11 K–B1!, winning a piece.

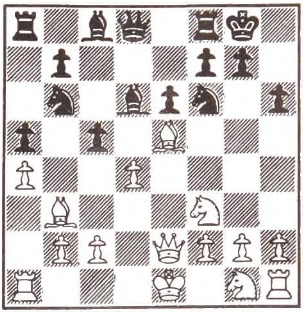
9 P–QR4

Or the more usual 9 P–QR3, but Tal has the following sharp continuation in mind.

9 . . . P–R3
10 N(N5)–B3 P–B4

The standard liberating maneuver.

11 B–KB4 B–Q3
12 B–K5 O–O



13 O-O-O!?

Typical Tal: initiating a wild melee, whose outcome is at the moment unclear. However, the more solid *13* R-Q1 creates more problems for Black than the text.

13 . . . P-B5!

Eliminating the threat in the center and opening up possibilities on the Q-side.

14 BxP NxP
15 N-R3 N-N3
16 P-KN4

Now the issue is squarely joined: which attack will get there first?

16 . . . P-R5!

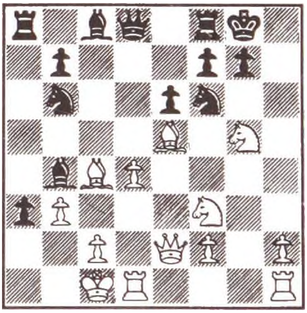
Cool. He proceeds to the counterattack, making no effort to provide additional defiense for his own King.

17 P-N5 PxP
18 N(R3)xP P-R6!

Secure in the knowledge that his threats are more immediate; e.g., if *19* KR-N1 PxPch *20* KxP (forced) N-R5ch *21* K-B1 B-R6ch and Black has all the play.

19 P-N3 B-N5

The position is extremely complicated. Keres recommends *19* . . . QN-Q4 as an improvement over the text, for if then *20* KBxN for example, *21* . . . P-R7 22 K-N2 B-R6ch 23 K-R1 Q-R4 24 Q-Q3 B-N5! 25 K-N2 PxB 26 BxN B-KB4! 27 Q-K3 KR-B1 and Black wins. After *19* . . . QN-Q4, best for White seems *20* Q-Q3 N-QN5 *21* Q-Q2 P-N4, with excellent attacking possibilities.



20 QR-N1?

Petrosian had rightly foreseen that this natural-looking attacking move loses at once. What Tal perhaps had in mind was the wild line *20* . . . B-B6 *21* Q-Q3 P-R7 22 K-Q1! allowing Black to queen, though analysis indicates that Black can still hold everything. Keres suggests, instead of the text, *20* P-B3! to give White some air; the best for both sides then is *20* . . . BxP *21*

Q–Q3 B–N7ch 22 K–N1 P–N3 23 KR–N1 NxB 24 PxN Q–N3! 25 K–R2 B–B8! 26 Q–N3 QxQch 27 KxQ BxN 28 NxB N–K1, with about an even endgame.

20 . . . P–R7!

Again cool, simple, and decisive. Tal had underestimated the strength of this advance.

21 K–N2

Forced.

21 . . . NxBch
22 QxN N–Q4!!

Once more it is Black who gets there first: the immediate threat is . . . B–B6ch.

23 N–K4

There is nothing better: if 23 NxKP P–R8=Qch! 24 RxQ BxN wins quite easily, and if 23 BxP B–B6ch 24 QxB NxQ 25 NxKP P–R8=Qch is the cunning answer.

23 . . . P–B3

A perfectly adequate defense.

24 B–B4

Still trying. On 24 B–N3 P–B4 wins at once, for if then 25 B–K5 R–B2.

24 . . . B–R6ch
25 K–R1 NxB

Finis.

26 P–R4 R–B2
27 R–N4 Q–R4
Resigns

There is nothing to be done: if he takes his piece back with 28 RxN B–N7ch 29 KxB P–R8=Qch leads to mate.

Boris Spassky

Boris Spassky, the man who dethroned Petrosian, was born in Leningrad in 1937. Thus he was only four when the Nazis attacked his homeland, and his early life was spent in considerable turmoil, both personal and political. Father and mother were divorced while he was still a young child. Because of the siege of Leningrad, he was evacuated away from the heart of the war.

He learned to plav chess at the age of five from his father; he relates that it was accidental since his father preferred dominoes. Spassky incidentally is the most open of all the Soviet champions, and more is known of his personal life than of any of the others. He says he liked the Rook more than any other piece because it moved in such a straight line; one is reminded of Einstein's remark that his first attraction to mathematics and physics came at about the age of five when he was fascinated by the workings of the compass.

In certain respects Spassky was a boy wonder at chess. At the age of ten he reached second category, and at twelve he was a candidatemaster. In 1952, when he was only fifteen, he finished second in the Leningrad championship, behind Taimanov but ahead of both Levenfish and Korchnoi.

In 1955 came his first international success: he won the junior championship of the world. Shortly thereafter he showed that he was not merely a junior by finishing third in the U.S.S.R. championship, only half a point behind the joint winners Geller and Smyslov and tied with Botvinnik, Petrosian, and Ilivitsky. Since he was only eighteen, he was already being hailed as the Crown Prince of the chess world. By the next year, 1956, he was third in the Candidates' Tournament at Amsterdam, ranked an international grandmaster at nineteen: the youngest ever seen up to that time, a record which was to hold until Fischer advanced to that rank a few years later.

After this brilliant start came a severe letdown, equally characteristic for his life and his play. From then until 1961 his results were either bad or at best mediocre. When he lost to Lombardy in the students' match between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., he was blamed by the Soviet hierarchy. The next year he was excluded from the Soviet team and forced to stay home. He has always been reported to have somewhat dissident views and has been punished or reprimanded on several other occasions by the Soviet authorities.

It was in this period that his first marriage broke up. He said of himself and his wife: "We were like Bishops of opposite colors." Much of his poor performance was ascribed to these personal difficulties.

Spassky has always recognized what a temperamental person he is. At one point he said about his development:

"I got quite passionate when I was very young, up to the age of nine or ten. Between 1946 and 1950 I regularly played up to five hours a day. After that the emotion diminished and chess became a day to day habit. Probably love between people develops in the same way. As a young boy, I never thought that I should become a strong chess player or a professional. Later when I grew up, I understood that it was necessary for me to take chess more seriously; but I continued to be very lazy about it—this is a contradiction, but it's in my nature to be like a Russian Bear: someone who is very calm and lazy and who even finds it an effort to spend the time to stand up."

Noteworthy in Spassky's psychology is his apparent lack of a will to win. Of all the world champions he seems to have taken the least pleasure in trouncing his opponents, a necessary ingredient for victory in any contest. In one tournament he even went so far as to offer every one of his opponents a draw!

Nevertheless, after 1961 the Russian Bear began to stand up and be counted more and more. Toward the end of that year he won the Soviet championship, always the strongest tournament in the world after the world championship contests themselves. A number of other victories culminated in defeats of Keres and Tal in set matches for the world championship preliminaries in 1965 (when the system was changed from tournaments to matches), which qualified him for the world title bout with Petrosian in 1966. It was a strenuous match, going the full length of the prescribed twenty-four games. Seventeen were drawn, Spassky won three, Petrosian won four; so Boris had lost by the odd point. Shortly thereafter he finished ahead of Petrosian in the strong international tournament at Santa Monica. It was clear that these two were pretty much on a par, and it was anticipated that the younger man would sooner or later pull ahead.

This was exactly what did happen three years later, when Spassky had again qualified to play Petrosian for the title. Boris won by six games to four with thirteen draws. He was finally world champion.

Once he had become world champion there were many indications that he was not comfortable in the role. He lacked the determination to win. In one tournament he had spent his spare time playing bridge with some friends, all masters of much inferior rank. He could not bring himself to beat them at the chess board, contenting himself instead with draws. At other times he remarked that he would rather not be world champion, he would much sooner be an ordinary guy just playing chess for the fun of it. After his loss to Petrosian he wrote with prophetic insight:

"I hope I shall be stronger in three or four years' time than now [1966]; but after that I shall decline and another strong player will take my place. Chess is an abnormal way of life, and to remain at the top you need to be very self-disciplined. Botvinnik is a very dedicated man and has this discipline, but it is a quality you need to be born with. I am quite the opposite; very impractical and completely disorganized."

Once he had acquired the title in 1969, his play did begin to slip. In the Alekhine Memorial Tournament of 1971 he could only finish tied for sixth, and other performances were also mediocre. When he faced Fischer for the title in 1972, it looked as though his heart were not in it. His play was incredibly bad, though Fischer's was incredibly good. In the first ten games, in spite of Fischer's blunder in the first and forfeit in the second, the American came out ahead with a score of 6½ to 3½; it was only in the second half that Spassky could hold his own, but by then it was too late.

Again it was reported that he had been disciplined by the Soviet hierarchy for his loss. He did make a comeback of a sort by winning the Soviet championship in 1973, but in the world championship elimination matches the next year he lost to Karpov. Whether he will ever reach his old heights again is questionable at this time.

Spassky's style at its best is in many respects completely rounded. Original in the opening, imaginative in the middlegame, accurate in the endgame, at his best he seems almost unconquerable, except for a certain willingness to draw too quickly.

In the following game, which virtually clinched the title for him, Spassky is seen at his best: direct, aggressive, and imaginative.

SPASSKY PETROSIAN

19th Game
World Championship, 1969
Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 N–KB3 P–Q3
3 P–Q4 PxP
4 NxP N–KB3
5 N–QB3 P–QR3
6 B–KN5 QN–Q2

The order of moves has become increasingly important. Petrosian, pressed for a victory, is rather careless. More precise is 6 . . . P–K3 7 P–B4 B–K2 (or now 7 . . . QN–Q2 or even the attempt at the Poisoned Pawn variation with 7 . . . Q–N3), with a sharp game full of chances for both sides.

7 B–QB4!

Sozin's idea, which has infused new life into this line. The point is that in many variations the sacrifice at K6 is powerful; also White can proceed with his attack on the K-side immediately.

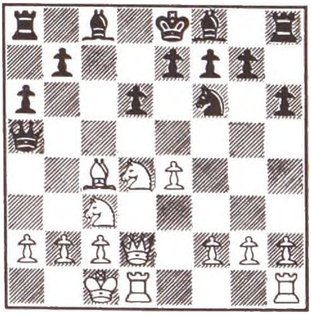
7 . . . Q–R4?

Inconsistent, since it merely furthers White's attack. Best seems 7 . . . P–QN4 and . . . B–N2, since the immediate sacrifice of 8 BxPch? is unsound.

8 Q–Q2 P–KR3

In a well-known game Spassky–Polugaevsky, U.S.S.R. Championship 1958, Black tried 8 . . . P–K3, and after 9 O–O–O P–N4 *10* B–N3 B–N2 *11* KR–K1, White had an overwhelming position. Petrosian tries an alternative which is not much better.

9 BxN NxB
***10* O–O–O**



The lines are now clearly drawn; White will go over to the attack quickly.

***10* . . . P–K3**
***11* KR–K1 B–K2**

Petrosian has only a choice of inferior positions. On the more natural-looking *11* . . . B–Q2, there would follow *12* P–B4 O–O–O *13* P–B5, with a strong initiative; e.g., *13* . . . R–K1 *14* PxP PxP *15* P–K5! PxP *16* N–B3.

12 P–B4 O–O
13 B–N3

The alternative *13* P–B5 at once was also strong.

13 . . . R–K1

Preparing to hold on to his pawn at K3. He might have done better to start his counterattack on the Q-side.

14 K–N1 B–B1

Hoping perhaps for *15* P–B5 P–K4, although Black does not do too well there either.

15 P–N4!

The logical continuation, stronger than P–B5, which can be kept in reserve.

15 . . . NxNP
16 Q–N2 N–B3

If instead *16* . . . P–K4 *17* N–B5 BxN *18* PxB N–B3 *19* R–N1 Q–B2 (best) *20* N–Q5 NxN *21* BxN K–R1 *22* P–B6! P–KN3 *23* P–B5! is decisive.

17 R–N1

There is no immediate win in sight, but Black's defense is immensely difficult.

17 . . . B–Q2

This Bishop finally moves for the first time!

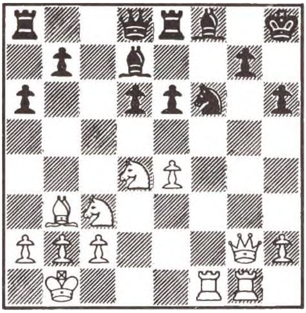
18 P–B5! K–R1

Allows for various brilliant finishes. The position looks bad, for the natural defense *18* . . . P–K4 *19* N–B3 B–B3 *20* Q–N6!, attacking both the N and the KBP, wins at once.

19 QR–KB1 Q–Q1

Passive defense, but if *19* . . . PxP *20* BxP R–K2 *21* B–N3 is decisive.

20 PxP PxP



21 P–K5!

Spassky now winds it up with a series of brilliant sacrifices.

21 . . . PxP
22 N–K4!!

Threatening to capture the Black N at B3, breaking through the Black defenses.

22 . . . N–R4

He has only a choice of which brilliancy to submit to. If *22*

. . . NxN 23 RxBch and mates next, while if 22 . . . PxN 23 NxN and Q–N6 decide.

23 Q–N6 PxN

Desperation; on 23 . . . N–B5 24 RxN PxR 25 N–KB3 wins, because of the threat of N–N5: If in defense now 25 . . . Q–N3 26 R–N5! (threatening N–B6) Q–Q1 27 N–K5! and White mates.

24 N–N5! Resigns

Petrosian has to give up his Queen to stop mate, for if 24 . . . N–B3 25 RxN. But even that is not enough, since after 24 . . . QxN 25 RxQ PxR 26 QxNch K–N1 27 Q–B7ch K–R1 28 QxB he remains with a Rook for the Queen, and he is still in a mating net.

The Danish grandmaster has sired a most curious opening, 1 P–QN3. Here it is administered a stinging rebuke by then world champion Spassky.

LARSEN SPASSKY

Soviet Union vs. World,
Belgrade, 1970
Larsen's Opening

1 P–QN3 P–K4
2 B–N2 N–QB3
3 P–QB4 N–B3

Black's game is free and easy. It is not clear what Larsen expects to gain with his rather bizarre opening.

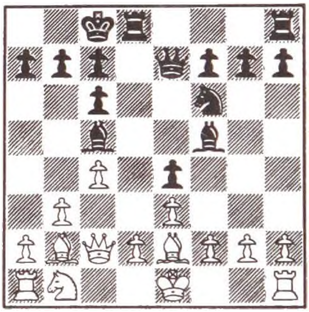
4 N–KB3 P–K5
5 N–Q4 B–B4

Again developing with tempo.

6 NxN QPxN
7 P–K3

The fianchetto is more natural, but in reply to 7 P–KN3, Black's 7 . . . N–KN5 is too powerful.

7 . . . B–B4
8 B–K2 Q–K2
9 Q–B2 O–O–O



10 P–B4

After only ten moves White is struggling to stay alive.

10 . . . N–N5

Threatening to break in on the Q-side.

11 P–N3 P–KR4
12 P–KR3

White is already at a loss for a good continuation. If 12 N–B3 P–R5 13 BxN BxB 14 QxP Q–Q2! with a won game, since he threatens both PxP and QxPch; e.g., if 15 P–Q4 PxP! is decisive.

12 . . . P–R5!!

Anyhow!

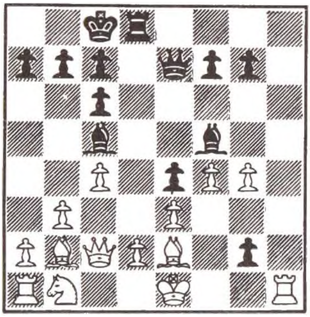
13 PxN PxP!!
14 R–N1

On the alternative *14* RxR RxR *15* PxB R–R8ch *16* B–B1 P–N7 wins.

14 . . . R–R8!!!

A beautiful conclusion.

15 RxR P–N7



A most remarkable position; White is a Rook and a piece ahead, and yet he cannot escape mate.

16 R–B1

The main variation is *16* R–N1 Q–R5ch *17* K–Q1 Q–R8 *18* K–B1 QxRch *19* B–Q1 BxNP, with an easy win.

16 . . . Q–R5ch
17 K–Q1 PxR=Qch
Resigns

After *18* BxQ BxPch White is mated.

The sacrifice of a Queen in grandmaster play is understandably a rarity. Here Spassky manages it, speculatively but successfully.

BYRNE **SPASSKY**

3rd Game
Qualifying Match, 1974
Ruy Lopez

1 P–K4 P–K4

In the first game Spassky had played the Sicilian with rather poor results.

2 N–KB3 N–QB3
3 B–N5 P–QR3
4 B–R4 N–B3
5 O–O B–K2
6 R–K1 P–QN4
7 B–N3 P–Q3
8 P–B3 O–O
9 P–KR3 N–N1
10 P–Q4 QN–Q2
11 QN–Q2 B–N2
12 B–B2 R–K1

So far all as in the 10th Match Game Fischer–Spassky, 1972, where Fischer continued *13* P–QN4 B–KB1 *14* P–QR4, but Spassky equalized with *14* . . . N–N3. Byrne tries something else.

13 N–B1 B–KB1

Uncovering on the KP.

14 N–N3

More logical is *14* P–Q5.

14 . . . P–N3
15 P–N3 B–N2
16 P–QR4

This move would have been stronger if White had played P–QN4 first. Black has a surprising rejoinder to the text.

16 . . . P–Q4!!

It is axiomatic that if Black can play this move without punishment in any of the KP defenses he has equalized. So Byrne looks for some way to punish.

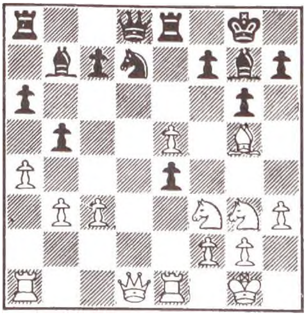
17 QPxP

The natural-looking reply, which leads into the combination. But nothing better is on the horizon: if *17* NxP NxN *18* PxN NxP *19* NxN PxN *20* QxQ QRxQ *21* BxP BxB *22* RxB R–Q8ch and Black should win.

17 . . . N(B3)xP!!

The point; not *17* . . . N(Q2)xP? *18* NxN RxN *19* P–KB4 R–K1 *20* P–K5 and White gets the better of it.

18 BxN PxB
19 B–N5

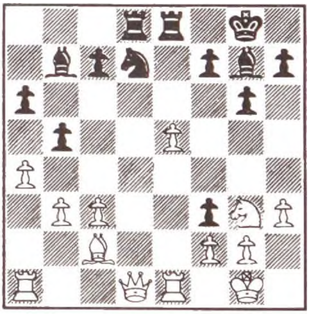


No doubt Byrne had been figuring here on the routine reply *19* . . . Q–B1 *20* NxP NxB *21* RxB NxP *22* NxN BxN *23* Q–K1! with advantage, for if *23* . . . Q–B4 *24* B–B4!. He is in for a rude awakening.

19 . . . PxN!?

Spassky himself expressed the opinion afterward that the Queen sacrifice was speculative; it is however hard to defend against. Black is not compelled to sacrifice; he can equalize easily enough with *19* . . . P–KB3.

20 BxQ QRxB



21 RPxP?

Giving up prematurely. White appears to be lost in all variations, but the alternatives offer more hope. The main lines are:

I. *21* NPxP NxP *22* Q–B2 NxPch *23* K–B1 NxR *24* RxN RxRch *25* KxR B–B6! and the threat of . . . BxBPch is decisive.

II. *21* N–B1 (recommended by Spassky as best) NxP *22* Q–B2 PxNP *23* N–R2 (thus blocking the check at B6) P–N4 *24* Q–B5

P–R3 25 P–B3 PxP 26 PxP B–QB1, and despite the material disadvantage, the strongly placed Black pieces would seem to be decisive; however, this was certainly White's best practical chance.

III. 21 P–K6 N–K4 22 PxPch KxP 23 Q–B1 K–N1 24 R–K4! (a good chance) BPxP 25 KxP N–Q6 26 Q–K3 BxP 27 R–Q1 N–B5ch 28 QxN RxR(Q8), and again Black, now even with material equality near, should win.

Nevertheless, all of these possibilities held opportunities in practical play; after the move chosen Byrne's game is hopeless. With the loss, his first in the match, went his spirits; throughout the remainder of the match he played well below his top form.

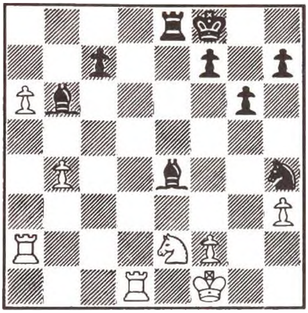
21 . . .	NxP
22 PxRP	RxQ
23 KRxR	B–QR1
24 PxP	NxPch
25 K–B1	BxP
26 QR–B1	N–Q7ch
27 K–N1	B–R4

To gain time so that precise analysis could be done during adjournment.

28 P–N4	N–B6ch
29 K–B1	N–R7ch
30 K–N1	N–B6ch
31 K–B1	B–N3
32 R–B2	N–R7ch
33 K–N1	N–B6ch
34 K–B1	K–B1
35 N–K2	N–R7ch

Still stalling for time.

36 K–N1	N–B6ch
37 K–B1	B–K5
38 R–R2	N–R7ch
39 K–N1	N–B6ch
40 K–B1	N–R5



The last move before adjournment; he builds up a winning plan now.

41 N–B4

Black was threatening to win a pawn with . . . B–N7ch.

41 . . .	B–B6
42 R–Q3	P–N4
43 N–K2	B–N7ch
44 K–K1	

If instead 44 K–N1 N–B6ch 45 KxB N–K8ch and . . . NxR.

44 . . .	N–B6ch
45 K–Q1	N–K4
46 R–QB3	B–Q4

The two Bishops dominate the board.

47 R–Q2	B–B5
48 R–R3	R–R1

Simple enough: he will win pawns.

49 P–B4

A desperate attempt to simplify.

49	. . .	PxP
50	NxP	RxP
51	RxR	BxR
52	N–Q5	B–B5
53	NxB	PxN
54	R–Q6	P–N4
55	K–Q2	N–N3
56	K–K3	P–R4
	Resigns	

Lev Polugaevsky

Polugaevsky has been one of the main pillars of Soviet team victories in the past ten years. Born in 1934, he came to prominence rather late for a chess master when, in 1961, he was second in the U.S.S.R. championship, only half a point behind Spassky. Since then he has been a consistently high scorer, though he has never reached world championship class. By profession he is an engineer.

Like most of his fellow Soviet masters Polugaevsky does not try to do too much in the openings, looking rather for a chance later on. Here is one of his best efforts in which this strategy works out to perfection.

POLUGAEVSKY KORCHNOI
Soviet Union, 1966
English Opening

1	P–QB4	P–K3
2	N–QB3	N–KB3
3	N–B3	

Typically uncommitted. 3 P–K4 leads to some lively play. 3 P–Q4 transposes to the QP.

3	. . .	B–N5
4	Q–N3	P–B4
5	P–QR3	B–R4
6	P–N3	N–B3

To prevent an early P–Q4.

7	B–N2	P–Q4
8	O–O	

White is now playing a King's Indian in reverse; these reverse openings have become an important part of the modern master's repertoire.

8	. . .	BxN?

Inconsistent; simpler seems 8 . . . O–O and then . . . P–Q5.

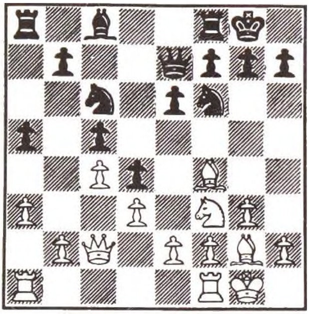
9	QxB	P–Q5
10	Q–B2	P–QR4

Usual in this variation but not really called for here. Better . . . Q–K2 and . . . P–K4.

11	P–Q3	O–O
12	B–B4	

Now White can prevent the freeing . . . P–K4 for a while.

12	. . .	Q–K2



13 N–K5! NxN
14 BxN

Now Korchnoi discovers, to his dismay, that the normal *14* . . . N–Q2 *15* B–B4 P–K4 *16* B–Q2 P–B4 *17* P–B4 would open more lines for White than for Black, and it is White who has the two Bishops. The loss of tempo with his tenth move has cost him dearly.

14 . . . N–R4

So he goes in for this maneuver to exchange the enemy Bishop, but White has a neat rejoinder.

15 P–K3! P–B3
16 Q–K2! P–KN3
17 P–KN4! N–N2

17 . . . PxB *18* PxN would obviously be bad.

18 B–N3

So he has escaped with the two Bishops, and Black is still cramped.

18 . . . P–R5

Perhaps to prevent a Q-side pawn advance, but it merely creates another weakness. Polugaevsky has his chance now.

19 PxP PxP
20 P–B4 Q–B4

Because of the dominating position of the White KB Black cannot develop his Bishop yet.

21 B–K1!

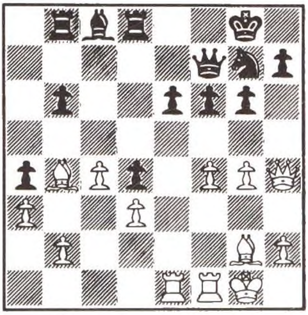
Neatly getting his Bishop into a more active position.

21 . . . R–Q1
22 B–N4 Q–B2
23 Q–KB2 R–N1

Whereas with every move White strengthens his attack, Black is still struggling to develop.

24 Q–R4 Q–B2
25 QR–K1 P–N3

Now Black seems to be getting out of the hole, but it is really too late.



26 P–KB5!!!

Opens up the Black position in a remorseless manner. Korchnoi has no good defense.

26 . . . **P–KN4**

There is nothing better: if 26 . . . KPxP 27 R–K7, and if 26 . . . NPxP 27 **PxP** NxP 28 RxN PxR 29 Q–N3ch and 30 QxR.

27 **PxP** **NxP**

Obviously 27 . . . PxQ 28 PxQch KxP 29 R–K7ch is hopeless.

28 **Q–R6**

The attack on the BP breaks through.

28 . . . **N–B5**
29 **RxN!** **PxR**
30 **QxP(B4)**

Not 30 R–K7 Q–N3. Now with the Rook at N8 attacked and R–K7 threatened, Black can do nothing.

30 . . . **BxP**

Perhaps hoping for 31 QxB K–R1, though this will win for White as well.

31 **B–Q5!** **Resigns**

For if 31 . . . RxB, first 32 Qx Rch.

Leonid Stein

Like Polugaevsky, Stein came to the game rather late. Born in 1934, he achieved grandmaster status in 1962. In 1963, 1965, and 1967 he was U.S.S.R. champion. Until his premature death in 1973 he was one of the main pillars of Soviet supremacy. In 1973 he was ranked tied for twelfth in the world hierarchy.

In the following game he crushes an opening inaccuracy by his opponent.

STEIN LIEBERSOHN
Erevan, 1965
Pirc-Robatsch Defense

1 **P–K4** **P–Q3**
2 **P–Q4** **N–KB3**
3 **N–QB3** **P–KN3**
4 **P–B4** **B–N2**
5 **N–B3** **O–O**

This opening, which accepts positional inferiority for Black, can only be played on the basis of tactical finesses. Here the freeing attempt 5 . . . P–B4 is called for. The 17th game of the Fischer–Spassky match then continued 6 PxP Q–R4! 7 B–Q3 QxBP 8 Q–K2 O–O 9 B–K3 Q–QR4 10 O–O and White had a slight advantage.

6 **P–K5!**

Now this move is too powerful. The same line was played in Bisguier-Larsen (see p. 320).

6 . . . KN–Q2
7 P–KR4

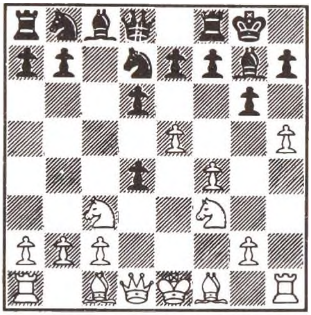
Direct and to the point.

7 . . . P–QB4

Now this is too late.

8 P–R5! BPxP

Accepting the pawn sacrifice, but he has nothing better.



9 QxP PxP

Now Black wins a pawn, since 10 PxP?? fails to 10 . . . NxP. But Stein has something else in mind.

10 Q–B2!

Of course.

10 . . . P–K3

The threat was Q–R4.

11 PxNP BPxP

He does not want to open the Rook file entirely.

12 Q–N3

Planning N–N5.

12 . . . PxP
13 BxP Q–R4
14 B–Q2 N–KB3
15 B–QB4

All the White pieces are coordinated to perfection, and with every move he reinforces his various mating threats.

15 . . . N–B3
16 O–O–O

Once more the threat is N–KN5.

16 . . . Q–QB4
17 Q–R4!

Protecting the Bishop and building up pressure on the KR-file.

17 . . . N–KR4

He protects himself against N–K4.

18 N–K4 Q–N3

At least he can threaten mate too!

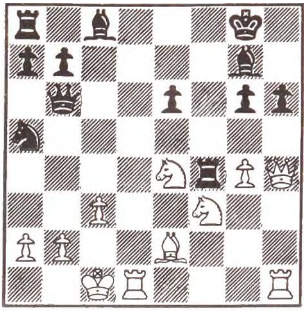
19 P–B3 N–R4

To get the Bishop off the dangerous diagonal; otherwise N–N5 wins.

20 B–K2

But now he has an even more sinister threat, P–KN4.

20 . . . P–KR3
21 P–KN4 N–B5
22 BxN RxB



23 R–Q8ch

Immediately decisive.

23 . . . R–B1
24 N–B6ch! K–R1

On 24 . . . BxN 25 RxRch KxR 26 QxBch, Black's King falls apart.

25 QxPch!! Resigns

Black is mated; the main variation is 25 . . . BxQ 26 RxBch K–N2 27 R–R7ch KxN 28 RxR mate.

Ewfim Geller

Another outstanding Soviet grandmaster, Geller was born in 1925. He reached the grandmaster class in 1952. First in the Soviet championship of 1955, after winning a tie-breaking match with Smyslov by the score of 4–3, he has since consistently finished high in national and international play. In 1973 he was ranked tied for twelfth in the world hierarchy.

Geller has always been known as a gambit player, ever ready to enter upon sacrifices, whether speculative or not. Here is one of his best efforts.

KOTOV GELLER

U.S.S.R. Championship

1949

King's Indian Defense

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–KN3
3 N–QB3 B–N2
4 P–KN3 O–O
5 B–N2 P–Q3
6 N–B3 QN–Q2
7 O–O P–K4
8 P–K4 PxP

Usually Black interpolates 8 . . . R–K1 first. The text is positionally weak but has many tactical opportunities.

9 NxP N–B4
10 P–B3

Not necessary at this point; 10 P–KR3 is better.

10 . . . KN–Q2

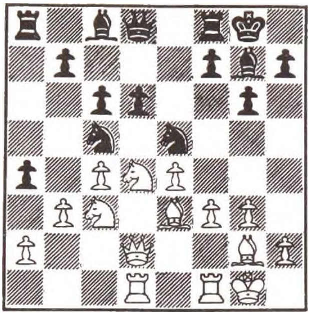
Seeking to take immediate advantage of White's last move.

11 B–K3 P–QB3
12 Q–Q2 P–QR4
13 QR–Q1 N–K4

Attacking the BP and preparing to move one of his Knights deeper into the White position.

14 P–N3 P–R5

Accepting the initiative.



15 N(Q4)–K2?

Kotov loses his way in the complications. Botvinnik later recommended instead 15 P–B4! N(K4)–Q6 16 NxRP NxN 17 PxN N–B4 18 NxP! PxN 19 BxN B–N5 20 BxP BxR 21 QxB R–K1 22 P–K5, and with three pawns for the exchange White has all the prospects.

With the text White seems to threaten to win a piece with BxN.

15 . . . PxP!!

So he gives it to him.

16 BxN NxQBP
17 Q–B1 PxP

Ending up with two strong passed pawns for the piece. Even stronger was the consistent sacrifice 17 . . . PxB!! 18 RxQ RxR, and White has a hard time finding a defense.

18 NxP Q–R4
19 QxN B–K3
20 Q–B1 PxB
21 N(R2)–B3 P–QN4
22 N–N1

Kotov underestimates the Black pawns. Geller himself later suggested as best 22 P–B4 B–N6 23 R–Q6 P–N5 24 P–K5!, returning the piece with good drawing chances.

22 . . . P–N5
23 N–B4 B–N6
24 R–Q6

Loses quickly. Even here it was better to return some of the material with N–Q2.

24 . . . P–B5!
25 RxBP P–B6

Now these two forward, connected passed pawns are unstoppable.

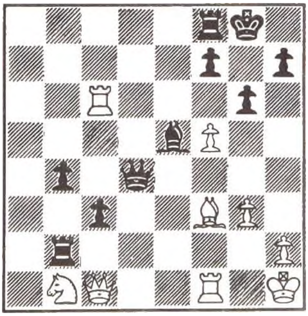
26 N–Q5 BxN
27 PxB QxP
28 P–B4 Q–Q5ch
29 K–R1 R–R7
30 B–B3 R–QN7

He is in no hurry.

31 P–B5

Hoping for some counterplay on the KB-file.

31 . . . B–K4!



With the immediate threat of . . . RxPch; then after KxR, Black has . . . Q–R5ch and mate soon.

32 Q–K1 R–Q1

To block N–Q2 after . . . P–B7.

33 B–K4 K–N2!

Without any immediate threat, but White is in a kind of zugzwang.

34 P–B6ch K–N1
35 R–R6

So that if 35 . . . P–B7 36 N–Q2 QxN 37 QxQ RxQ? 38 R–R8ch is mate.

35 . . . P–R4
36 R–R5 P–R5

To which there is no defense. The rest is desperation.

37 BxP RxPch
38 KxR BxPch
39 QxB PxQch
40 K–R3 PxB
Resigns

Mark Taimanov

Mark Taimanov is unusual in that he has been outstanding in both music and chess. Born in 1926, he proved to be a prodigy in both fields. At the age of nine he played a Beethoven Concerto in a children's musical, and two years later, as one of the most promising young players, he was selected to be coached by Botvinnik. He fulfilled the promise of both appearances. In 1952 he became an international grandmaster, and in 1956 he was U.S.S.R. champion. In his other specialty, he has been a concert pianist from an early age.

Stylistically Taimanov is a specialist in sharp defensive play. Here is an excellent example.

SZABO TAIMANOV
Szczawno-Zdroj, 1950
Nimzo-Indian Defense

1 P–Q4 N–KB3
2 P–QB4 P–K3
3 N–QB3 B–N5
4 P–QR3

Botvinnik's favorite line.

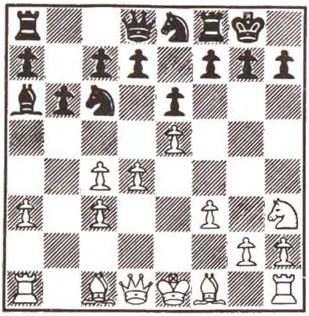
4 . . . BxNch
5 PxB O–O
6 P–B3 N–K1!

The idea is to avoid complications on the K-side and to move as directly as possible to the attack against White's weakened Q-side pawns.

7 P–K4 P–QN3
8 N–R3

An unusual idea. The more routine 8 B–Q3 B–R3 is favorable for Black.

8 . . . N–QB3
9 P–K5 B–R3



Now the battle is joined: the QBP is under attack.

10 Q–R4

Inconsistent, especially since he loses the pawn anyhow. More logical was *10* B–Q3. However, Taimanov has to defend himself carefully.

10 . . . N–R4
11 B–K3 P–KB3

Trying to clear the square Q3 for his Knight.

12 B–Q3 PxP
13 B–N5

He must try to attack as soon as possible. If instead *13* PxP? BxP *14* BxB Q–R5ch, coming out a pawn ahead.

13 . . . Q–B1
14 PxP P–R3
15 B–K3

This loses against exact defense. More promising, as post-mortem analysis indicated, was *15* Q–B2!, for if then *15* . . . PxB *16* B–R7ch K–R1 *17* NxP Q–Q1 *18* P–KR4, with a strong attack. Best after *15* Q–B2 is *15* . . . P–Q3 *16* B–R7ch K–R1 *17* Q–N6 Q–Q2, with unclear complications.

15 . . . P–Q4!

Szabo probably did not realize how strong this move was.

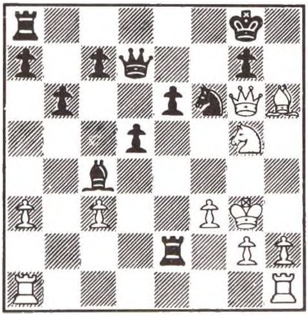
16 Q–B2 NxP
17 BxN BxB
18 Q–N6

Threatening BxRP; White's attack still looks formidable.

18 . . . R–B4!
19 BxRP

Or *19* P–B4 Q–Q2, with a free and easy game.

19 . . . RxPch
20 K–B2 R–K7ch
21 K–N3 Q–Q2
22 N–N5 N–B3



Now White's attack still looks powerful, but there is no good continuation; Taimanov has sized up the position well.

23 **KR–K1** **R–K1**
24 **RxR** **BxR**
25 **P–KR4**

The defense rests on one precise tactical point: after 25 R–K1 B–Q6! 26 QxB PxB 27 Q–N6ch Q–N2 28 QxQch KxQ 29 NxPch K–B2, White's Knight is unable to get out alive, and so Black comes out a piece ahead.

25 . . . **P–K4**

Once this is possible, the game plays itself.

26 **K–B2** **B–B5**
27 **R–Q1** **P–B4**
28 **P–R5**

Not really threatening anything, but he does not know what to do.

28 . . . **P–Q5**
29 **R–K1** **P–Q6**

Taimanov avoids a minor trap: after 29 . . . PxP 30 R–Q1 gives White some slight counterplay.

30 **K–N1** **B–N6**

Planning to advance and queen his QP.

31 **N–K4** **NxN**
32 **RxN** **R–K3**

But not 32 . . . P–Q7?? 33 BxP and the Bishop cannot be taken because Black's Rook is unprotected.

33 **Q–N4** **P–Q7**
34 **BxQP** **QxB**
35 **P–QB4** **Q–Q8ch**
36 **K–R2** **Q–Q3**
37 **P–B4** **B–B7**
38 **R–K3** **B–Q8**
39 **Q–B5** **BxP**
40 **RxP** **RxR**
Resigns

Viktor Korchnoi

Korchnoi has had one of the longest sustained records of any of the Soviet grandmasters. Born in 1931, he reached grandmaster rank in 1956. Then he won the Soviet championship three times, in 1960, 1962, and 1964. After many fine successes, he reached the height of his career at the relatively late age of 43, when he met Karpov in the semifinals for the world championship.

There is nothing bizarre or doctrinaire about Korchnoi's play. A solid master, he is always a formidable opponent. In the world championship qualifying matches in 1974, he defeated former world champion Petrosian by three to one with one draw. Here are two of his outstanding games from that match.

KORCHNOI PETROSIAN

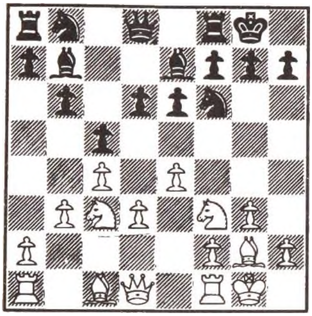
1st Match Game, 1974

English Opening

1 **P–QB4** **N–KB3**
2 **N–QB3** **P–K3**
3 **N–B3** **P–QN3**
4 **P–K4** **B–N2**
5 **P–Q3** **P–Q3**

The typical modern opening: neither side makes any great effort to get an advantage, preferring to wait until some chance is offered by the opponent.

6	**P–KN3**	**B–K2**
7	**B–N2**	**O–O**
8	**O–O**	**P–B4**
9	**P–N3**	



Korchnoi is following the game Tal–Polugaevsky, Tallinn 1973, which continued 9 . . . P–QR3 *10* B–N2 Q–Q2 *11* R–K1 N–B3 *12* B–KR3 Q–B2 and now finally *13* P–Q4 PxP *14* NxP NxN *15* QxN B–B3 *16* P–QR4 KR–Q1 *17* QR–B1, with some advantage to White. Both sides have to calculate on the consequences of the delayed break in the center.

9 . . . **N–R3**

Holding open the possibility of . . . P–Q4.

10 **R–K1** **P–K4**

The decision to lock the center is a natural one; however it does not work out too well. Since . . . P–Q4 was not acceptable, his opening strategy cannot be recommended.

11 **B–KR3**

Preparing counterplay on the K-side.

11 . . . **N–B2**

More energetic was *11* . . . B–B1.

12	**N–KR4**	**P–N3**
13	**N–N2**	

If at once *13* P–B4? PxP *14* PxP NxP wins a pawn.

13 . . . **N–K3?**

Positionally second-rate; he has to try to counter with . . . P–KB4 as soon as possible. Failing that, he drifts into a bad game.

14	**P–B4**	**PxP**
15	**PxP**	**N–R4**

Here this Knight is misplaced. *15* . . . N–Q5 was still preferable.

16	**N–Q5**	**B–KB3**
17	**R–N1**	**B–Q5ch**
18	**K–R1**	**N–B2**

He is unable to play . . . P–B4 because the N is loose after PxP.

19	**N(Q5)–K3**	**N–N2**
20	**P–B5!**	

Beating him to the punch. Now Black remains cramped.

20	. . .	**N(B2)–K1**
21	**R–B1**	

Regrouping for the K-side attack.

21 . . . N–B3
22 N–B2

Threatening to win immediately with NxB and B–N5.

22 . . . B–K4
23 B–N5 Q–K1
24 N(B2)–K3 K–R1
25 Q–K1

Now Korchnoi has a stranglehold on the position; Black is doomed to passivity.

25 . . . N(B3)–R4
26 B–N4 R–KN1

Willing to give up a pawn for some fresh air. Yet 26 . . . P–B3 27 B–R6 R–N1, unappetizing as it looks, was more consistent.

27 P–B6 N–K3
28 Q–R4 NxB
29 QxN(N5) B–Q5

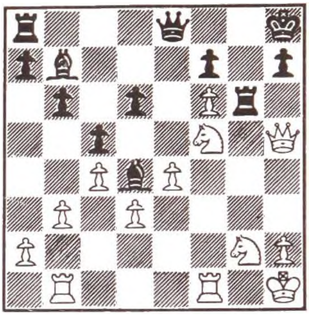
If instead 29 . . . B–B1 30 BxN PxB 31 QxP R–N3 32 N–R4 is too strong.

30 BxN PxB
31 QxRP R–N3

The outcome of the wearisome maneuvering is a plus pawn for Korchnoi; will he be able to use it is the question now.

32 N–B5!

Protecting the pawn, for if 32 . . . RxP? 33 NxB wins.



32 . . . Q–K4
33 R–B3

And now Petrosian is helpless against the threat along the KR-file.

33 . . . RxP

Or 33 . . . QxP 34 NxB QxN 35 RxP.

34 R–R3 P–KR3

Hoping perhaps for some relief after 35 NxP QxQ, though that would win for White too.

35 Q–N5

Finis; he threatens both Q–N7 mate and RxPch.

35 . . . R–K1

Hastens the end.

36 Q–N7 mate

KORCHNOI PETROSIAN

5th Match Game, 1974

Sicilian Defense
(by transposition)

1 P–QB4 P–QB4
2 N–KB3 P–KN3
3 P–Q4 PxP

4 NxP B–N2
5 P–K4

Thus Petrosian has permitted the widely famed Maroczy Bind in the Sicilian.

5 . . . N–KB3
6 N–QB3 N–B3
7 B–K3

More energetic here is 7 N–B2.

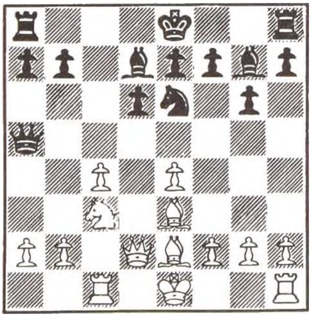
7 . . . N–KN5
8 QxN NxN
9 Q–Q1 N–K3

All book so far. While White retains a small initiative, Black manages to equalize most of the time.

10 Q–Q2 P–Q3
11 B–K2 Q–R4

The correct counterattack. Passive play may turn out badly; e.g., *11* . . . B–Q2 *12* O–O O–O *13* QR–Q1 B–QB3 *14* N–Q5 R–K1 *15* P–B4 N–B2 *16* P–B5 and White won brilliantly in Larsen–Petrosian, Santa Monica 1966 (see p. 311).

12 QR–B1 B–Q2



13 O–O N–B4
14 B–R6! O–O

Avoiding the trap: if *14* . . . BxN? *15* RxB NxP? *16* Q–Q4! wins.

15 BxB KxB
16 P–QN3 B–B3
17 KR–K1!

The KP is indirectly defended.

17 . . . N–K3
18 B–N4 QR–Q1

An easier way to equalize was . . . Q–N4, though the text is still adequate.

19 R–K3 N–B5?

It is only with this faulty maneuver that Petrosian gets into a lost game. *19* . . . Q–KN4 was still good enough.

20 P–N3 P–R4

Consistent, though bad. After *20* . . . N–K3 *21* P–B4 Q–QB4 he was still better off than as played.

21 Q–N2!!

The subtle point, which suddenly turns the tables.

21 . . . PxB
22 N–Q5 dis ch P–K4
23 PxN

For now Korchnoi has a heavy attack against the Black King, whose Queen is cut off.

23 . . . QR–K1

On *23* . . . P–B3 there could follow *24* R–N3 B–Q2 *25* P–N4!!

Q–R5 26 R–QR3 Q–B3 27 P–QB5! with all kinds of possibilities.

24 R–N3 B–Q2
25 R–Q1 P–B3
26 PxP RxP

He has little choice: if 26 . . . QPxP 27 NxP, and if 26 . . . BPxP 27 N–K3.

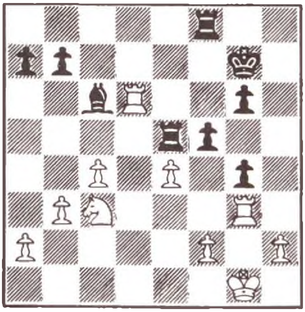
27 N–B3!

Simple and beautiful; the win of the QP tears Black's position apart.

27 . . . Q–B4
28 Q–Q2 P–B4

Desperation.

29 QxP QxQ
30 RxQ B–B3



31 P–B3!

Again simple and decisive; on 31 . . . PxKP 32 RxP(N4) wins, while the capture by the NP would open up the road to both Rooks.

31 . . . K–R3
32 P–B4 R(K4)–K1
33 PxP B–B6

One last try.

34 RxPch K–R2
35 R–N5?

An inaccuracy: 35 R–K6 was correct.

35 . . . R–K8ch?

Black goes astray because of time pressure: 35 . . . R–K6 36 N–Q5 R–K8ch 37 K–B2 R–K7ch was much stronger since 38 K–B1 RxKRP is rather dangerous.

36 K–B2 R–KR8
37 R–R5ch K–N2
38 N–Q5 R–QR8

Now the Rook has little play; if 38 . . . R–K1 39 P–B6ch K–N3 40 R–N5ch K–B2 41 RxB is sufficient.

39 P–B6ch K–N3
40 R–N5ch K–B2
41 R–N7ch K–K3
42 R–K7ch K–B4
43 R–K5ch Resigns

Vlastimil Hort

The Czech grandmaster Hort, although not a professional, has been a consistent participant in tournaments of the 1960s and 1970s. Born in 1944, he reached grandmaster status in 1965. His best performance to date has been to tie for first in the Interzonal at Sousse in 1967. In the 1973 FIDE ranking he was placed eighteenth.

Here is a sparkling example of his talent.

HORT GHEORGHIU

Hungary, 1964

Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 N–QB3

Unusual and not particularly good.

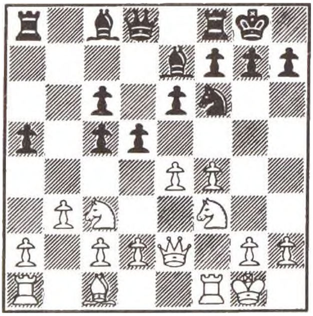
2 . . . N–QB3
3 P–B4 P–K3
4 N–B3 P–Q4
5 B–N5 N–B3
6 Q–K2

The system chosen by Hort, although none too good, is at least little known.

6 . . . B–K2
7 O–O O–O
8 BxN

At least Black is saddled with doubled pawns.

8 . . . PxB
9 P–QN3 P–QR4



Playing to undouble his pawns, which White naturally tries to prevent.

10 P–Q3 B–R3
11 K–R1 N–Q2

On *11* . . . P–B5 White can reply *12* NPxP PxBP *13* P–Q4 as in the game.

12 B–N2 P–B5

Anyhow.

13 NPxP PxBP
14 P–Q4 P–R5
15 QR–Q1! R–K1
16 N–K5! NxN
17 BPxN Q–N3
18 B–R1!

This was the idea: the Bishop, even though seemingly out of play at QR1, nevertheless exerts a strong influence, as will be seen.

18 . . . P–R6
19 Q–R5

So that if *19* . . . R–KB1 *20* R–B3, with play on the KR-file.

19 . . . P–N3
20 Q–R3 R–KB1

Hoping to free himself with . . . P–B3.

21 P–Q5!

Anyhow.

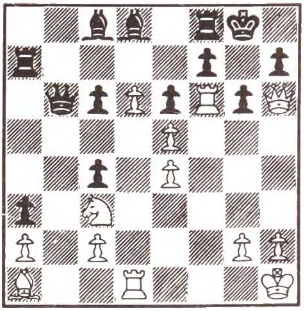
On *21* . . . BPxP 22 PxP P–B3 there would follow 23 P–Q6 B–Q1 24 QxPch and wins.

21 . . . B–B1
22 Q–R6 R–R2
23 P–Q6 B–Q1

Still hoping for . . . P–B3.

24 R–B6!

The Rook is immune: if 24 . . . BxR 25 PxB is mate.



24 . . . R–N2

He has to wait for the execution.

25 R–B3

On 25 N–K2 at once Black can try 25 . . . Q–N8.

25 . . . R–Q2

Forced to be passive: if 25 . . . P–B3 26 PxP BxP 27 N–Q5 Q–N8 28 N–K7ch! and wins.

26	**R(Q1)–KB1**	**Q–R4**
27	**N–K2**	**Q–R5**
28	**N–B4**	**Resigns**

Black is helpless against the various threats: if 28 . . . R–N2 29 NxNP RPxN 30 R–R3 and mates.

Robert Huebner

The West German grandmaster Robert Huebner has been one of the strongest of the new generation to develop outside of the Soviet Union. In 1973 he ranked fifteenth in the world hierarchy. Here is one of his most solid victories.

HUEBNER GLIGORIC

Skopje, 1972

Slav Defense

(by transposition)

1	**P–KN3**	**P–KN3**
2	**B–N2**	**B–N2**
3	**P–Q4**	**P–Q4**
4	**N–KB3**	**N–KB3**
5	**O–O**	**O–O**
6	**P–B4**	**P–B3**

Transposing to an old line of the Slav which was always considered poor for Black. Better here is 6 . . . PxP and . . . P–B4.

7	**N–K5**	**B–K3**
8	**PxP**	**PxP**

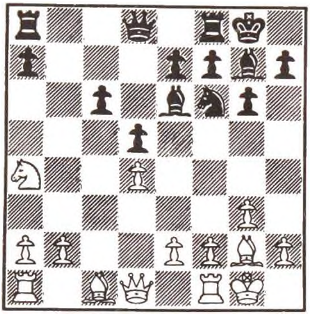
Inconsistent; he should have continued with . . . BxP.

9 N–QB3 N–B3?

Needlessly accepting the backward pawn on an open file. 9 . . . QN–Q2 was necessary; if then 10 P–B4 R–B1 would be sufficient, though White has a bit the better of it.

10	**NxN**	**PxN**
11	**N–R4**	

Huebner has outplayed his opponent and now has a clear positional advantage.



11 . . . N–Q2

The struggle now centers around Black's attempt to liberate himself with . . . P–QB4; he does not succeed.

12 P–N3! Q–R4?

Abandoning the struggle. Black can play *12* . . . P–B4, but White has prepared to trade the backward pawn for a positional plus by *13* P–K3 PxP *14* PxP R–B1 *15* B–QR3 R–K1 *16* Q–Q2. However, this was preferable to the text.

13 B–N2

So that if now *13* . . . P–B4 *14* B–B3 Q–N4 *15* PxP! BxB (or *15* . . . NxP *16* BxB) *16* NxB, winning the QP.

13 . . . QR–B1
14 R–B1 B–B4

Again the advance of the QBP would leave the QP hanging.

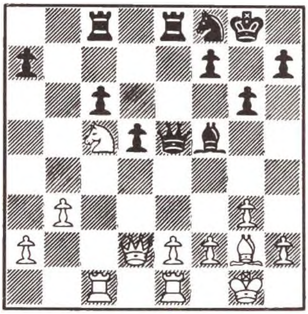
15 R–K1 KR–K1
16 B–QB3 Q–N4
17 Q–Q2 Q–N1

To break in the center; if at once *17* . . . P–K4 *18* PxP BxP *19* BxB RxB *20* P–K3 and Black's black squares are still weak.

18 B–N2 P–K4
19 PxP NxP

He is resigned to the backward pawns on the Q-side and hopes for counterplay elsewhere, which is not forthcoming.

20 B–Q4 B–B1
21 B–B5 N–Q2
22 BxB NxB
23 N–B5 Q–K4



Gives White a chance for a favorable simplification, but he really had little choice.

24 P–K4! PxP
25 BxP BxB
26 RxB Q–Q4
27 Q–K3 RxR

On *27* . . . N–K3 *28* R–K1 wins a pawn.

28 NxR Q–K4
29 R–B5 Q–N2

A-hunting he cannot go; since on *29* . . . Q–R8ch *30* K–N2 QxP

31 N–B6ch wins: 31 . . . K–R1 32 Q–QB3 N–K3 33 N–N4 dis ch K–N1 34 N–R6ch K–B1 35 R–QR5 (35 Q–R8ch also wins) followed by Q–R8ch and QxR.

30 R–QR5 R–Q1
31 RxP

With the loss of this pawn Black's game falls apart. The rest is academic.

31 . . . N–K3
32 K–N2 Q–K4
33 Q–KB3 P–KB4
34 N–B3 R–Q3
35 P–KR4 P–R4
36 N–K2 R–Q7
37 QxQBP!

An effective combination: if 37 . . . RxN (or 37 . . . QxN) 38 Q–K8ch N–B1 39 Q–B7ch and mates.

37 . . . Q–K5ch
38 QxQ PxQ
39 R–K7!

White must still play carefully; on N moves, Black has . . . P–K6.

39 . . . N–B4
40 N–B3 K–B1
41 R–B7 N–K3
42 NxP RxP
43 R–B6 K–B2
44 R–N6 R–K7
45 N–B3 R–B7
46 N–Q5 P–N4
47 PxP NxP
48 R–N7ch K–N3
49 N–B4ch Resigns

He must lose the RP too.

12.

The Age of Fischer

Some masters have captured the popular imagination at different times. Morphy was the hero of the U.S. for a few years after his return from his triumphant European tour. Reshevsky, the boy wonder of the early 1920s, became a household word. Capablanca, during his tenure as champion, was known by everybody as the "chess machine."

Yet all of these have already been surpassed by Robert James Fischer, popularly known as Bobby. His battle for the world championship in 1972 with Boris Spassky made front-page headlines throughout the world. It was even rumored that Brezhnev consulted with Boris, and Kissinger with Bobby, so that the match even had political overtones. Bobby, the new champion, became a folk hero; he had seemingly but to ask, and the chess world would give it to him.

An American professor of physics, Arpad Elo, has devised an ingenious rating system, which was later adopted by the FIDE and is now in use world-wide. On this ranking scale masters of the past can be rated as well as those of the present. All the ratings are now in. Bobby has the highest ever recorded.

Bobby was born in 1943 in Chicago. His mother, a nurse at the time, later persisted in the study of medicine which had been interrupted by the war and became a pediatrician in her sixties; in her own way she is as determined as her famous son. About his father nothing is known; the parents divorced shortly after the boy was born, and the mother was left to bring up the two children, Bobby and a sister five years older.

After a move to New York, life was far from easy for the family. Chess was Bobby's main consolation, and as far back as his life is traced, chess was always his major passion. At the age of seven, shortly after he had learned the moves, he announced that he was the greatest player who had ever lived. Unlike other children who make such statements he made good his boast.

School meant little to him. He attended dutifully, but showed no interest in any of the academic subjects. His major was chess. When he reached his sixteenth birthday, he left, no longer required by law to stay and then already a famous chess master. "Teachers are jerks" was his considered opinion. Arguments on this topic will be ignored. Later the high school which had virtually expelled him gave him a gold medal as a favorite son. Stranger things have happened to heroes in history.

For quite a while he was regarded as a pest by most of the chess officialdom. His boasting was considered childish arrogance. Then he began to improve. First came the junior championship, which he won at thirteen. Enough to make people sit up and take notice, but after all the junior champion is not the world champion, even if Bobby thought the two were equivalent. Then came his first staggering achievement: in 1958, shortly before his fifteenth birthday, he won first prize in the American championship, ahead of Reshevsky and all the other American masters.

Not only his victory, but the way he won was astounding. Without losing a game, he seemingly romped through the affair with the finesse of a seasoned master. Here was clearly a phenomenon without parallel in the history of the game: the strongest fourteen-year-old who had ever lived. Where would he go?

In American championships he continued to win every time. In the 1963–64 contest he actually won every game. To beat him was almost unheard of for an American; draws were an achievement.

It was natural that a match with Reshevsky should be arranged, and it was in 1961 by the wife of the famous cellist Gregor Piatigorsky. Here Bobby's superiority was not so manifest. After eleven games the score was one to one with nine draws. Then came what was later to become typical of his tournament behavior. When a game was scheduled for an early morning hour he refused to play. The committee forfeited him; he refused to continue the match. Technically Reshevsky was victor, though it was already clear that Fischer had surpassed him. Many other committees had to contend with Bobby's temperament in future years.

After the U.S. came the international contests. Here it took him some time to find himself. Although generally a high scorer, he found that there were others who scored high too. Those were first the years of Tal, then of Petrosian and Spassky. In the Candidates' Tournament at Yugoslavia in 1959, he finished in a tie for fifth, losing all four of his games against the winner Tal, who became world champion the next year. True, Bobby could now, at 15, reasonably claim to be the best player in the Western world. But that was not enough for him. The story was that the only Yugoslavian word he had learned was "prvi," meaning first, and first was what he meant to be.

Continuing participation in international contests brought mixed results. A tie for first with Spassky at Mar del Plata in 1960 was followed by an unbelievable thirteenth shortly thereafter in Buenos Aires—the worst result of his career. Then in 1962 he outdistanced everybody at the Interzonal in Stockholm, finishing 2½ points ahead of his nearest competitors, Petrosian and Geller. It was the first time since World War II that an occidental had finished ahead of the top Soviet masters; Petrosian, it will be recalled, became world champion the next year.

Then came the Candidates' Tournament at Curaçao. Again he failed against the top Russians, finishing fourth, three and a half points behind the winner Petrosian. This time he reacted in print with an article in *Sports Illustrated* which claimed that "The Russians have fixed world chess." His charge, the same one that a Dutch newspaper had made in 1947 and that others have made since, was that the Russians play as a team, under orders from a captain, and thus force out the non-Soviet opponents. There appeared to be some basis for this charge in that Petrosian, the winner, had drawn no fewer than ten of the twelve games against his Soviet rivals (Tal withdrew because of illness).

Although the charges were of course indignantly denied, there was enough obvious substance in them to lead the FIDE to change the selection system. From now on after a certain point the outcome would be decided by set matches among the top eight rather than by tournaments; further, the world champion no longer had the automatic right to a return match if he lost. In spite of these changes, which have remained in force ever since, Fischer swore off FIDE tournaments and virtually confined himself to American tournaments for the next five years.

During this period two momentous changes occurred in his life. First he broke off all relationships with his mother, emphasizing again the solitary, isolated kind of life style that he preferred. And second he joined a religious sect some time around 1965 that went back to the fundamentals of the Bible. He has remained true to this sect ever since.

It was in this period too that Ralph Ginzburg, the publicist, printed a most unfavorable description of him as a person in one of the leading American journals. Bobby was described as an immature, rather prejudiced ("I only like aristocrats"), poorly educated boy whose life was almost entirely confined to the chess board. After that Bobby never again gave interviews and shunned journalists like the plague.

In the United States he continued to carry everything before him. Yet there was little to do; in 1964 his record shows not a single tournament in which he took part. Finally in 1967 he decided to return to the international arena.

The events at Sousse in 1967 have obscured his incredible record from 1967 to his conquest of the world championship in 1972. At the Interzonal in Sousse he was far ahead after ten rounds with a score of 8½–1½ (seven wins and three draws). Then the Soviets refused to reschedule a game which had been postponed because of his religion. Confused by the situation and without any support (the U.S. Chess

Federation was as usual conspicuous by its absence), Bobby withdrew, although he was already virtually certain to be first.

If he is considered to have been first at Sousse, which he deserved, then he won first prize outright in every tournament he played in from 1967 to the title match in 1972. At Buenos Aires in 1970 he was first by a margin of 3½ points; Smyslov finished seventh there. In the match of U.S.S.R. vs. the rest of the world, he beat Petrosian with two wins and two draws. Such a series of successes over a period as long as six years, continually competing with the best in the world, has no parallel among previous champions; neither Botvinnik, nor Capablanca, nor even Lasker has ever done it.

Equally astounding was his winning streak from Palma de Majorca in 1970 until he won the title from Spassky in 1972. In sixty-five games he won 39, drew 21, and lost 5; one of these losses was his forfeit to Spassky in the second game of the match. But even counting that, his percentage against the best in the world is 76.2, a result never before achieved. He has real cause to have made good his boast that he is the greatest player who has ever lived.

In addition to his chessboard achievements, Bobby has succeeded in elevating the game to a level never before reached. Without any precedent whatsoever Bobby began to make demands for a purse for the 1972 match with Spassky which exceeded the heretofore wildest dreams. Yet countries all over the world began bidding for the match. Yugoslavia entered the highest bid of nearly $150,000, whereupon Bobby demanded a share of the gate receipts. When this was refused and the Yugoslavs in turn demanded an insurance policy to guarantee Bobby's appearance, the match seemed to have collapsed. Then Reykjavik, the capital of Iceland, offered to sponsor the event for $125,000 purse, which was finally accepted by both sides.

At the last minute however Bobby engaged in such a dramatic display of either temperament or shrewd business dealings that he had the entire world enthralled. Finally a British financier, James Slater, equaled the Icelandic purse, and the match was on for a quarter of a million dollars. After that it did not come as a surprise when a Las Vegas hotel offered a purse of $1.4 million for a return match, a purse which Fischer incidentally turned down.

The title match with Spassky in 1972 vaulted chess to a new level. It was the center of interest for the whole world during the summer that it lasted. Even during the match Bobby's activities made excellent stories, apart from the interest in the games per se. He was leaving, he was staying, he wanted music, cars, a new hotel, more space, and so on. It was not only great chess, it was more entertaining than many a movie. Even

Spassky got into the act when he felt that he was being unduly influenced by chemical and electronic means, and the Icelandic authorities obediently took his chair apart, discovering only two dead flies who presumably had had no bearing on the outcome.

When it was over Robert Fischer was a figure of world renown, and an American folk hero. Mayor Lindsay declared September 21, 1972, Bobby Fischer day and ordered a public reception in his honor at City Hall in New York. Television, newspaper, even movie rights were his for the asking.

Yet here a sad note begins to creep in. Where before Bobby had always been talking of playing any challenger, now he retired from competitive chess. In Chester Fox's lawsuit against him, based on his alleged refusal to honor the contract allowing Fox to film the match in Iceland, he was so apathetic that his own lawyers petitioned to withdraw from the case. In the summer of 1974 a dispute arose between Bobby and FIDE. The FIDE voted that the world title match would be limited to 36 games; Bobby wanted it of indefinite duration. Bobby also imposed a condition that if the score should reach 9–9 the challenger should have to score two more wins to gain the title. At first the FIDE turned down his conditions, whereupon he resigned his title. Then an extraordinary meeting of the FIDE was called at the initiative of the Philippines, which had offered the incredible purse of $5 million for the match. At this second meeting, Bobby's first condition, for a match of indefinite duration, was surprisingly accepted, while his second condition, for a two-game margin of victory for the challenger, was rejected. Bobby insisted that his conditions were "not negotiable," remaining adamant to all pleas to change his mind. Although Euwe gave him every chance to be conciliatory, Bobby could not be shaken. Accordingly the title was awarded to Karpov on April 1, 1975.

Much has been written about Bobby's peculiar behavior since he won the title, culminating in his deliberate resignation over what anyone else would consider a triviality. Many have rather cynically described him as engaging in "gamesmanship." It seems more likely that the capture of the title led to an emotional upset of serious proportions. His conditions for the match with Karpov seem motivated more by inner fantasies than anything else. Thus so far he has not played a serious game of chess since he became champion. There is the grave danger that he may never play again. It would be tragic for the world of chess to lose such a great mind. It can only be hoped that the FIDE or the U.S. Chess Federation will take some steps to help him out of his turmoil.

What is most astounding about Fischer is the maturity of style that he showed at a phenomenally early age. Although he can of course produce brilliant combinations, he displayed from the very beginning a grasp of the total strategy of the game which is truly astounding. The first game which brought him to the attention of the chess world has been aptly called "the game of the century." At the time he was only thirteen years old.

D. BYRNE FISCHER

New York, 1956

Gruenfeld Defense

1 N–KB3 N–KB3
2 P–B4 P–KN3
3 N–B3 B–N2
4 P–Q4 O–O
5 B–B4 P–Q4

Actually, against the Bishop move, . . . P–Q3 is a bit more precise.

6 Q–N3 PxP
7 QxBP P–B3
8 P–K4 QN–Q2

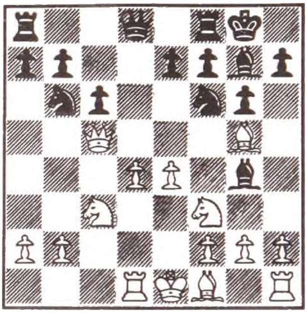
Thus a standard position in the Gruenfeld has been reached by transposition.

9 R–Q1 N–N3
10 Q–B5

Here the White Queen is misplaced; more usual is *10* Q–N3 B–K3 *11* Q–B2, with a freer game.

10 . . . B–N5
11 B–KN5?

Allows the brilliant combinational sequence; *11* B–K2 is best.



11 . . . N–R5!!

A brilliant reply: if *12* NxN NxP wins in all variations, the main one being *13* QxKP QxQ (*13* . . . Q–R4ch can also be played) *14* BxQ KR–K1, regaining the piece with much the better game.

12 Q–R3 NxN
13 PxN NxP!!

Another brilliant sacrifice.

14 BxP Q–N3!
15 B–B4

White's defense is already difficult. If *15* BxR BxB *16* Q–N3 NxQBP! *17* QxQ PxQ *18* R–B1 B–N5 leaves Black with an overwhelming position.

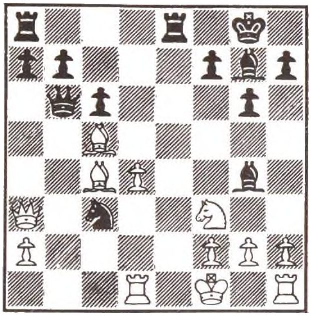
15 . . . NxQBP!

Logical: if *16* QxN KR–K1 regains the piece.

16 B–B5

Thinking that if now *16 . . .* Q–B2 *17* QxN wins a piece. But Bobby has been thinking too.

16 . . .	KR–K1ch
17 K–B1	



17 . . .	B–K3!!!!

An astounding reply which wins in all variations.

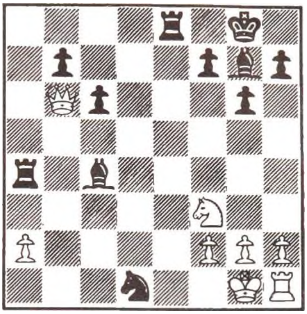
18 BxQ

There is nothing better: if *18* BxB Q–N4ch.

18 . . .	BxBch
19 K–N1	N–K7ch
20 K–B1	NxP dis ch
21 K–N1	N–K7ch
22 K–B1	N–B6 dis ch
23 K–N1	PxB
24 Q–N4	

There is no way to wangle out. If *24* Q–Q6 NxR *25* QxN RxP followed by . . . R–R8.

24 . . .	R–R5!
25 QxP	NxR



Bobby has a Rook, two pieces, and a pawn for the Queen—more than enough materially. Besides, he has a mating attack against the White King. The rest is a mopping-up operation which he conducts with absolute precision.

26 P–KR3	RxP
27 K–R2	NxP
28 R–K1	RxR
29 Q–Q8ch	B–B1
30 NxR	B–Q4
31 N–B3	N–K5
32 Q–N8	P–QN4
33 P–R4	P–R4
34 N–K5	K–N2
35 K–N1	B–B4ch
36 K–B1	

From here on in every move is check and ends in checkmate. But if instead 36 K–R1 B–Q3 37 Q–K8 R–R8ch 38 K–R2 Black can even win with the fancy 38 . . . K–B3! 39 Q–R8ch K–B4!.

36 . . .	N–N6ch
37 K–K1	B–N5ch

38	**K–Q1**	**B–N6ch**
39	**K–B1**	**N–K7ch**
40	**K–N1**	**N–B6ch**
41	**K–B1**	**R–B7 mate**

Even though Bobby had the title match in his pocket, the concluding game was a positional masterpiece.

SPASSKY FISCHER

21st Match Game, 1972

Sicilian Defense

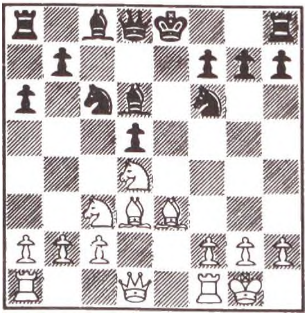
1	**P–K4**	**P–QB4**
2	**N–KB3**	**P–K3**
3	**P–Q4**	**PxP**
4	**NxP**	**P–QR3**
5	**N–QB3**	**N–QB3**
6	**B–K3**	**N–B3**

In theory this favors White, but Bobby has something up his sleeve.

7	**B–Q3**	**P–Q4!**

First innovation: he is prepared to accept the isolated pawn.

8	**PxP**	**PxP**
9	**O–O**	**B–Q3**



10	**NxN**	

To concentrate on the weak K-side pawns, but the timing is poor. More consistent was *10* P–KR3 O–O! *11* R–K1.

10	**. . .**	**PxN**
11	**B–Q4**	**O–O**
12	**Q–B3**	**B–K3**

Avoiding the trap: *12* . . . B–KN5? *13* BxN and White wins a piece.

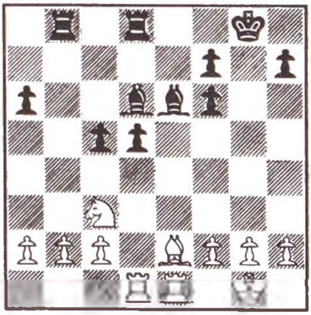
13	**KR–K1**	**P–B4!**

Played instantaneously; so Bobby obviously had the whole line prepared.

14	**BxN**	

Looks good but leads to a deep positional trap. A better alternative was *14* B–K5 BxB *15* RxB P–Q5 *16* N–R4 P–B5 *17* B–B1 and White's position is secure, whereas Black's advanced pawns are weak.

14	**. . .**	**QxB**
15	**QxQ**	**PxQ**
16	**QR–Q1**	**KR–Q1**
17	**B–K2**	**QR–N1!**



A most remarkable position. White was hoping to consolidate with N–R4, P–N3, B–K2, and B–B3, but he is not given the time.

18 **P–QN3 P–B5!**

And suddenly, White has a draw at best! Against the threat of . . . B–QN5 there is no good defense. So not only does he not have time to consolidate as hoped, he cannot even equalize. Truly a profound conception on Bobby's part!

19 **NxP**

He is already desperate. The only possible alternative is *19* N–R4 B–KB4 *20* P–QB3, but then *20* . . . PxP *21* PxP B–B7 gives Black a winning advantage.

19 . . . **BxN**
20 **RxB BxPch**
21 **KxB RxR**
22 **BxP R–Q7**
23 **BxP**

The more aggressive *23* R–K7 is met by *23* . . . RxQBP, for if *24* BxPch K–B1 *25* R–R7 RxRP *26* B–B4 RxBP, the seventh rank is of no real value to White.

23 . . . **RxQBP**
24 **R–K2 RxR**
25 **BxR**

Spassky is now hoping for some play with the two connected passed pawns, a threat which is easily met. He has a fairly easy draw here, but since he had to win to maintain his hold on the title, he plays on for quite a while.

25 . . . **R–Q1**
26 **P–R4 R–Q7**
27 **B–B4 R–R7!**

Fischer still has to avoid some traps: if *27* . . . RxP? *28* P–R5 R–R7 *29* P–R6 K–B1 *30* P–N4 R–R5 *31* P–N5 leads to a won endgame for White.

28 **K–N3**

Now White can draw easily enough by moving his King back and forth, but in view of the score he has to try something.

28 . . . **K–B1**
29 **K–B3 K–K2**
30 **P–KN4 P–B4!**
31 **PxP P–B3**
32 **B–N8 P–R3**
33 **K–N3 K–Q3**
34 **K–B3 R–R8**
35 **K–N2 K–K4**
36 **B–K6 K–B5**
37 **B–Q7 R–N8**
38 **B–K6 R–N7**
39 **B–B4 R–R7**
40 **B–K6 P–R4**

Slightly more accurate was *40* . . . K–N5 at once, since White has drawing chances with *41* K–R3, though Black still wins with best play after *41* . . . RxBP *42* P–R5 P–R5!.

Here Spassky sealed his move, *41* B–Q7. The next day he telephoned his resignation.

At his best Fischer has the capacity to play perfect and perfectly beautiful chess; in this respect he has been compared to Capablanca. Here is one of his outstanding victories, in which former world champion Petrosian never stands a chance.

FISCHER **PETROSIAN**

7th Match Game, 1971

Sicilian Defense

1 **P–K4** **P–QB4**
2 **N–KB3** **P–K3**
3 **P–Q4** **PxP**
4 **NxP** **P–QR3**
5 **B–Q3** **N–QB3**
6 **NxN!** **NPxN**
7 **O–O** **P–Q4**

Petrosian has been following the first game of his match with Spassky in 1969, which continued 8 N–Q2 N–B3 9 Q–K2 B–K2, where Black equalized and eventually won. But Bobby has a surprise in store for him.

8 **P–QB4!**

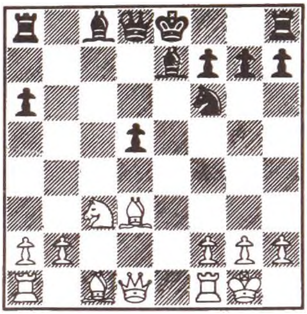
Far more energetic than Spassky's 8 N–Q2.

8 . . . **N–B3**
9 **BPxP** **BPxP**
10 **PxP** **PxP?**

Meets with a sharp refutation. Although 10 . . . NxP is none too good, it is still preferable to the text.

11 **N–B3** **B–K2**

Petrosian has scattered pawns, but otherwise his position looks solid enough.



12 **Q–R4ch!!**

Until the consequences of this move are weighed. Suddenly Bobby turns up with a won game.

12 . . . **Q–Q2**

He decides to offer a sacrifice. On the more obvious 12 . . . B–Q2 White replies 13 Q–Q4 with strong pressure; e.g., 13 . . . B–K3 14 P–B4 Q–B2 15 P–QN4 P–QR4 16 P–B5! B–Q2 17 R–K1 and White's game is overwhelming.

13 **R–K1!!**

Simple and elegant. He can it is true accept the sacrifice with 13 B–QN5 PxB 14 QxR, but after 14 . . . P–Q5 Black may build up some dangerous counterplay. The text in effect wins by strangulation.

13 . . . **QxQ**
14 **NxQ** **B–K3**
15 **B–K3** **O–O**

15 . . . N–Q2 16 P–B4 is no better.

16 **B–QB5**

Creates a stranglehold from which Black can no longer escape.

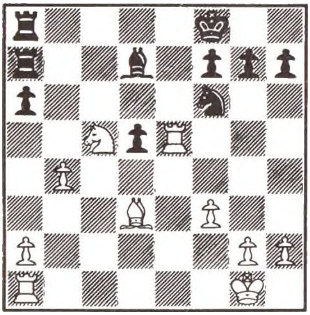
16 . . . KR–K1
17 BxB RxB
18 P–QN4!

No hurry; sooner or later a pawn will fall.

18 . . . K–B1
19 N–B5 B–B1
20 P–B3 R(K2)–R2

Somewhat better was 20 . . . RxRch 21 RxR N–Q2. However Black has no really adequate defense.

21 R–K5 B–Q2



Hoping for some liberation with . . . B–N4.

22 NxBch!!

Surprising that this exchange of the good Knight for the bad Bishop is so devastating; it must have taken Petrosian aback.

22 . . . RxN
23 R–QB1 R–Q3

Allows the penetration of the seventh rank, but he had to do something about the threat of R–B6.

24 R–B7 N–Q2
25 R–K2 P–N3
26 K–B2 P–KR4
27 P–B4

Planning eventually P–B5, and after . . . PxP, White plays BxP forcing the N to move and allowing the White Rooks to penetrate.

27 . . . P–R5
28 K–B3 P–B4

To stop K–N4.

29 K–K3! P–Q5ch
30 K–Q2 N–N3

Finally he has no choice; if the QR moves, White will reply R–R7, winning a pawn.

31 R(K2)–K7 N–Q4
32 R–B7ch K–K1
33 R–QN7 NxNP
34 B–B4 Resigns

There is nothing to be done against R–KR7.

Here is another of Fischer's many elegant victories, which shows an almost magical touch as the denouement unfolds.

FISCHER RUBINETTI

Palma de Majorca, 1970

Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 N–KB3 P–Q3
3 P–Q4 PxP

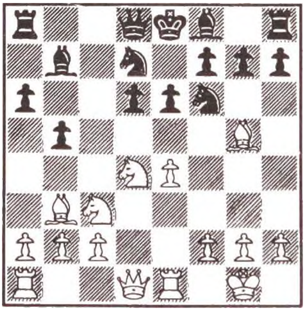
4 NxP N–KB3
5 N–QB3 P–K3
6 B–QB4

The Sozin Attack, which might more appropriately be called the Fischer Attack, since he has mastered it more profoundly than any other master.

6 . . . P–QR3
7 B–N3 P–QN4
8 O–O

Offering a sacrifice which few players dare to accept: after *8* . . . P–N5 9 N–R4 NxP *10* Q–K2 White has a powerful initiative.

8 . . . B–N2
9 R–K1 QN–Q2
10 B–N5



Now the position is exactly the kind that Bobby revels in, one full of subtle sacrificial possibilities.

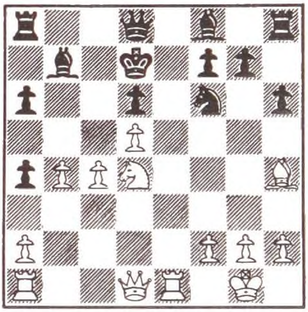
10 . . . P–R3

He already has to watch his step: if *10* . . . N–B4 *11* B–Q5! PxB *12* PxP dis ch with a winning attack.

11 B–KR4 N–B4

Now the combination works also.

12 B–Q5!! PxB
13 PxP dis ch K–Q2
14 P–QN4! N–R5
15 NxN PxN
16 P–QB4!



Winning the RP. With two pawns for the piece and the King driven out into the open, White's game is already won. Fischer drives the point home with precision.

16 . . . K–B1
17 QxP Q–Q2
18 Q–N3 P–N4

If instead *18* . . . B–K2 *19* N–B5 is too strong; he can also play *19* N–B6.

19 B–N3 N–R4
20 P–B5!

Taking advantage of Black's poor development.

20 . . . PxP
21 PxP QxP

On *21* . . . BxP 22 Q–N6 is the simplest, for if then 22 . . . NxB 23 P–B6!.

No doubt Rubinetti thought he had some defense now because he too threatens mate.

22 R–K8ch K–Q2
23 Q–R4ch B–B3
24 NxB Resigns

He is lost: if *24* . . . QxN 25 R–Q1ch, and if *24* . . . RxR 25 N–N4 dis ch wins the Queen.

Henrique Mecking

Like Fischer, Henrique Mecking was a boy wonder, winning the championship of Brazil at the age of thirteen. Unlike Fischer, his results did not live up to the early expectations, although he did win the championship of South America at the age of fourteen. His greatest success came in the qualifying tournament for the world championship in 1973, when he finished first at Petropolis by a wide margin. Since he is still so young (born in 1952), even though he is already a veteran of ten years of tournament play, much may yet come of him in the future.

In the following game he defeats an ex-world champion in smart fashion.

SMYSLOV MECKING

Petropolis, 1973
English Opening

1 P–QB4 P–K4
2 N–QB3 N–KB3

A solid defensive line which promises Black easy equality.

3 N–B3 N–B3
4 P–KN3 B–N5

Black has various good alternatives at his disposal; *4* . . . P–Q4 is the most logical but also the most complicated.

5 B–N2 O–O
6 N–Q5

A dubious line; 6 O–O is simpler.

6 . . . P–K5!
7 N–R4 B–B4!

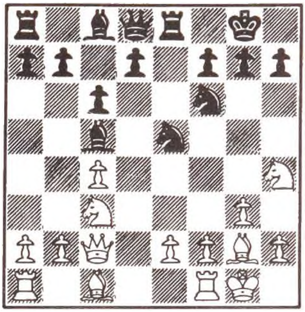
Mecking handles Smyslov's rather contorted opening attempt coolly. If now *8* NxNch QxN attacking the BP.

8 O–O R–K1
9 P–Q3 PxP
10 QxP N–K4
11 Q–B2 P–B3!

Puts the question squarely to White: what is the Knight doing there? Mecking already has a strong initiative.

12 N–QB3?

Surprisingly this is the losing move. However, after the preferable *12* N–K3 N–N3 *13* N–B3 N–K5 Black's pieces are better placed.



12 . . . NxP!!
13 N–R4

More logical seems 13 N–K4, except that Mecking probably had in mind the sacrificial line 13 . . . NxN 14 BxN RxB! 15 QxR P–Q4 16 Q–B2 B–KR6 17 R–Q1 Q–B3, with a strong attack (e.g., 18 N–B3 N–K4!).

13 . . . B–B1!
14 QxN P-QN4
15 Q–Q4 PxN
16 P–K4

Smyslov cannot pause to recapture the pawn, since the KP is loose.

16 . . . B–R3!
17 R–K1 Q–N3!

Every move virtually gains a tempo.

18 B–K3

If instead 18 QxRP B–B4 19 Q–B2 N–N5 wins.

18 . . . B–N5!
19 QxQ

White had to pay attention to his KP: if 19 KR–QB1 QxQ and . . . NxP, or 19 KR–Q1 QxQ 20 RxQ B–B4 21 RxRP B–N4 and wins.

19 . . . PxQ
20 KR–Q1 B–K7!

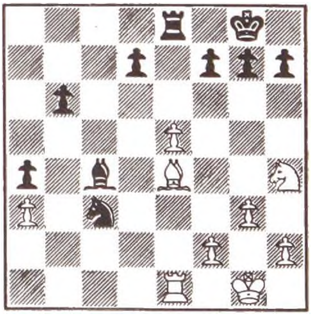
Allows Black to hold on to his extra pawn.

21 R–Q4 P–B4
22 RxB

Simplification is naturally to Black's advantage, but he has little choice. If 22 R–Q6 QR–N1! and White is in bad shape.

22 . . . PxR
23 P–K5 N–N5
24 BxR NxB
25 R–K1 B–B5
26 B–K4 N–Q4
27 P–QR3 PxP
28 PxP N–B6!

Precisely calculated.



29 B–B3 P–B3!
30 R–QB1 RxP!

The ingenious point: on 31 RxN R–K8ch 32 K–K2 B–B8ch White is mated.

31 K–N2	R–QB4!
32 RxN	B–B8ch
33 KxB	RxR

With Rook and two pawns for the two pieces and an additional pawn about to fall, the rest is easy for Mecking.

34 B–Q5ch	K–B1
35 K–K2	RxRP
36 K–Q2	P–QN4
37 N–B5	P–N5
38 N–K3	P–N6
39 K–B3	R–R7
40 K–N4	RxP
41 KxP	P–N7
42 B–R2	RxP
43 K–N3	R–R6
44 N–B1	R–R8
45 N–Q2	R–KN8
Resigns	

Contemporary chess depends very heavily on subtle nuances in the openings. In the following game Mecking demonstrates greater knowledge than his opponent, the Soviet champion, of the complex lines in the Sicilian.

SAVON MECKING

Petropolis, 1973

Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4	P–QB4
2 N–KB3	P–Q3
3 P–Q4	PxP
4 NxP	N–KB3
5 N–QB3	P–QR3
6 B–N5	P–K3
7 P–B4	QN–Q2

One of the most exhaustively analyzed positions in the openings. The usual line here is 8 Q–B3.

8 Q–K2

A peculiar-looking move, suggested recently and relatively untried.

8 . . .	Q–B2
9 P–KN4	

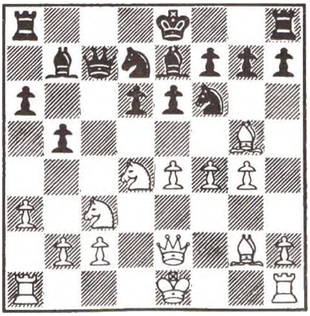
He follows the usual line of attack in this variation, but the Queen turns out to be misplaced at K2. Against Gheorghiu, in the same tournament, Bronstein tried 9 O–O–O, with advantage.

9 . . .	P–N4
10 P–QR3	

As a rule White tries to avoid the loss of time involved in this move.

10 . . .	B–K2
11 B–N2	B–N2

Once this kind of development has been completed, Black is bound to come out with a good game.



12 O–O–O R–QB1
13 B–R4

Suddenly White is at a loss for a good continuation. If 13 BxN NxB 14 P–N5 N–Q2 15 P–KR4 Q–B5 leaves Black with the initiative.

13 . . . Q–B5!
14 QxQ?

The exposed position of White's pawns is boomeranging. Better was 14 Q–B3, for if 14 . . . NxKP 15 NxN BxN 16 QxB BxB 17 N–B5 QxQ 18 NxPch K–K2 19 NxQ N–B4 with only a slight plus for Black.

14 . . . RxQ
15 B–B3

Loses a pawn in an ingenious combination. But after 15 BxN NxB 16 P–KR3 K–Q2, Black stands better.

15 . . . N–B4!
16 B–K2

There is no good defense. If 16 KR–K1 KNxKP! 17 BxB NxN wins.

16 . . . KNxKP!

The idea.

17 NxN

Or 17 BxR BxB 18 B–K2 NxN and 19 . . . BxR.

17 . . . BxN
18 BxB N–N6ch!!
19 K–N1

The alternative 19 NxN RxPch also loses.

19 . . . RxN
20 BxQP BxR
21 PxN RxRch
22 BxR K–Q2

Since he is a full exchange ahead the technical problem is easy for Mecking.

23 B–K5 P–B3
24 B–QB3 B–K5ch
25 K–R2 K–B3
26 P–QR4 R–Q1
27 B–K2 P–K4
28 BPxP BPxP
29 BxKP R–Q7
30 B–B1 R–Q8
31 PxPch PxP
32 B–R3 P–N5!

Now with mate threats.

33 BxP R–Q2
Resigns

Mate next is unavoidable.

John Grefe

One of the biggest upsets in American chess occurred in 1973 when John Grefe, a young California master, took first prize in the American championship. While he has not yet followed up suitably on this success, his future still looks bright. His devotion to chess is said to equal Bobby's. Here is the most brilliant game from his victory series, one of the outstanding games in this book.

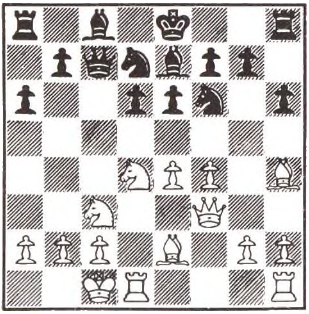
GREFE **BROWNE**

U.S. Championship
El Paso, 1973
Sicilian Defense

1 **P–K4** **P–QB4**
2 N–KB3 **P–Q3**
3 P–Q4 **PxP**
4 **NxP** **N–KB3**
5 N–QB3 **P–QR3**
6 B–KN5 **P–K3**
7 P–B4 **P–R3**

This interpolation serves no useful purpose in the variation that Black chooses; better the more usual *7* . . . B–K2.

8 B–R4 **B–K2**
9 Q–B3 **QN–Q2**
10 **O–O–O** **Q–B2**
11 **B–K2!**



With a subtle point: if now the normal *11* . . . P–QN4 *12* P–K5! B–N2 *13* PxN!! BxQ *14* BxB BxP *15* BxB R–QB1 *16* BxP, ending up with three pieces for the Queen and a strong position because of Black's lack of development.

11 . . . **R–QN1**
12 **Q–N3** **R–N1**

The typical position of this variation. Black's pieces are poorly coordinated; yet it is still difficult for White to press his advantage home. Grefe has a brilliant inspiration.

13 **KR–B1** **P–KN4**

Black must guard against various sacrifices. If at once *13* . . . P–QN4 *14* BxP! PxB *15* N(Q4)xNP Q–R4 *16* P–K5 with a winning attack.

14 **PxP** **N–K4**
15 **N–B3!**

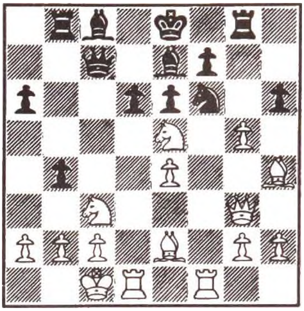
To remove the solid Knight at Black's center.

15 . . . **P–N4**
16 **NxN**

The main variation now is *16* . . . PxN *17* PxN! RxQ *18* PxB (threatening R–Q8ch) R–N4 *19* BxR PxB *20* B–R5 and wins. Browne was relying on the following counterthrust.

16 . . . **P–N5**

Perhaps hoping for *17* N–R4 PxN *18* PxN RxQ *19* PxB B–Q2 with the gain of a tempo, although even then White's attack persists.



17 NxP!!

Rips though the Black defenses.

17 . . .	PxN

On *17* . . . KxN *18* PxN! wins, for if then *18* . . . RxQ *19* PxB dis ch.

18 PxN!!	RxQ

He can give a spite check with *18* . . . PxPch *19* K–N1, but then has no more.

19 PxB

Threatening NxPch.

19 . . .	R–KN4
20 BxR	PxB
21 NxPch	Resigns

After *21* . . . KxP *22* R–B7ch White can win as he pleases.

Walter Browne

The young Australian grandmaster Browne migrated to America, where he became a citizen and a chess professional. The highlight of his career to date has been first prize in the U.S. Championship at Chicago in 1974. Brilliant and studious, his future looks promising.

One of the decisive games was won by Browne with a prepared opening innovation which has an interesting history.

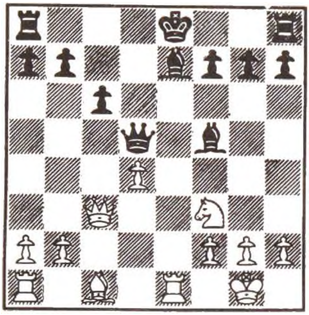
BROWNE BISGUIER

U.S. Championship
Chicago, 1974
Petroff's Defense

1	P–K4	P–K4
2	N–KB3	N–KB3
3	NxP	P–Q3
4	N–KB3	NxP
5	P–Q4	P–Q4
6	B–Q3	B–K2
7	O–O	N–QB3

This aggressive line had always been considered good. In view of White's innovation in the present game it must be questioned. In the 5th game of the Fischer–Petrosian match in 1971 Petrosian played passively, but Fischer was unable to break through.

8	P–B4	N–N5
9	PxP	NxB
10	QxN	QxP
11	R–K1	B–KB4
12	N–B3	NxN
13	QxN	P–QB3



Theory had considered this position equal; on ordinary moves Black replies . . . B–K3, castles, and is safe.

14 B–R6!!

A crushing novelty.

Many years ago Bobby Fischer came to me with the suggestion that we collaborate on a book on the openings; he had many new ideas. One that he showed me was this move. Now the question is: Did Bobby show it to Browne, or did Browne discover it independently?

14 . . . R–KN1

On *14* . . . PxB *15* R–K5 Q–Q2 *16* QR–K1 wins, for if *16* . . . B–K3 *17* P–Q5! PxP *18* RxB. Likewise, the alternative *14* . . . B–K5 does not suffice against *15* BxP R–KN1 *16* RxB QxR *17* R–K1 Q–N3 (*17* . . . QxRch is the best try) *18* Q–N4 O–O–O *19* RxB and wins.

15 R–K5 Q–Q2
16 QR–K1 B–K3
17 N–N5!

Breaks through the Black defenses.

17 . . . O–O–O

This loses quickly. The best try was *17* . . . BxN *18* BxB P–KR3 *19* B–R4 P–KN4 *20* B–N3 K–B1 (if *20* . . . O–O–O *21* P–Q5! BxP *22* R–K7), though White retains much the better of it with *21* Q–B3.

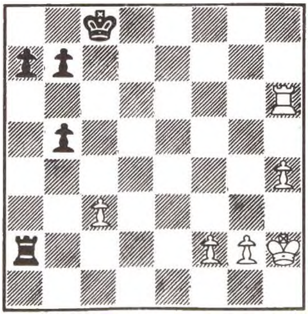
18 NxBP! BxN

There is nothing better.

19 RxB QxP
20 RxB QxQ
21 PxQ PxB

Bisguier's ingenious defense has at least netted him material equality, but the pawns are so weak that he is bound to lose some of them soon.

22 R–N1 R–N4
23 P–KR4 R–N4
24 RxR PxR
25 RxRP R–Q8ch
26 K–R2 R–Q7
27 RxRP RxRP



Now White wins the ending because his pawns are further advanced.

28	P–R5	RxP
29	R–R8ch	K–B2
30	P–R6	K–N3

If Black tries to get his Rook behind the passed pawns, White gains tempos for advancing; thus 30 . . . R–B3 31 P–N4 P–R4 32 K–N3 P–R5 33 P–R7 R–KR3 34 P–N5 R any 35 P–N6, etc.

31	K–R3	P–R4
32	P–N4	P–N5
33	PxP	PxP
34	R–K8	R–B8
35	K–N2	R–B2
36	P–N5	R–B4
37	P–R7	RxPch
38	K–B3	R–KR4
39	P–R8=Q	RxQ
40	RxR	Resigns

Lubomir Kavalek

The Czech master "Lubosh" Kavalek, who emigrated to the U.S. in the 1960s, has become one of the strongest American players. Top board for the U.S. at the Nice Olympiad in 1974, he turned in a sterling performance. Here is a brilliant game played when he was only nineteen.

GUFELD KAVALEK

Marianske Lazne, 1962

Ruy Lopez

1	P–K4	P–K4
2	N–KB3	N–QB3
3	B–N5	B–B4
4	P–B3	P–B4!?

A gambitlike variation.

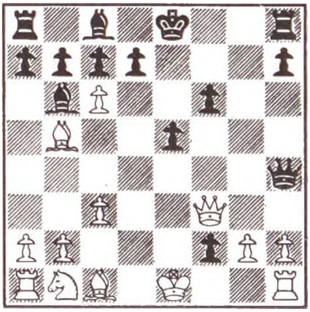
5	P–Q4	BPxP
6	N–N5	

Too fancy; better was 6 PxB PxN 7 QxP, with advantage to White.

6	. . .	B–N3
7	P–Q5	P–K6!
8	N–K4	Q–R5!
9	Q–B3	N–B3!?

A speculative sacrifice; better 9 . . . KN–K2 threatening R–KB1.

10	NxNch	PxN
11	PxN	PxPch



12 K–Q1?

Gives Kavalek his chance. Correct was 12 K–B1 NPxP 13 B–K2, followed by B–K3 and the capture of the pawn; then Black does not have enough to show for the piece.

12 . . . QPxP
13 B–K2

The countersacrifice 13 BxPch? is unsound because of 13 . . . PxB 14 QxPch K–B2 15 QxR B–N5ch.

13 . . . B–K3
14 Q–R5ch QxQ
15 BxQch K–K2

Black has three pawns for the piece and a much freer position—the ending cannot be held by White.

16 P–QN3 B–Q4
17 B–R3ch K–K3
18 B–N4ch P–B4
19 B–R3 KR–KN1

Winning another pawn.

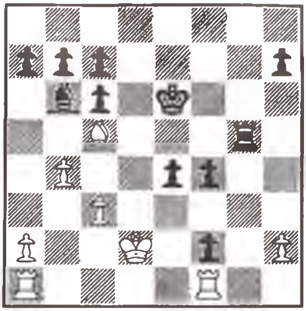
20 N–Q2 BxNP
21 BxB RxB
22 R–KB1 R–Q1!
23 K–K2 RxNch!!

He judges correctly that the pawn phalanx will triumph.

24 KxR P–K5
25 B–B8

A maneuver to block the Black Bishop.

25 . . . P–B5
26 P–N4 R–N4
27 B–B5



Now White seems to have worked out of his pickle. But . . .

27 . . . RxB!!!

Disillusions him.

28 PxR BxP
29 QR–N1 P–B6

In spite of the two Rooks White has no defense. If 30 RxNP P–K6ch queens.

30 R–N4 K–B4
31 R–Q4 BxR
32 PxB K–B5!!
Resigns

Even though he is a Rook ahead, the pawns cannot be stopped.

13.

The Age of Karpov

Anatoly Karpov

In spite of the superb organization of chess and the substantial rewards offered masters in the Soviet Union, few new names have appeared in the last decade. The one that has however makes up for half a dozen others. Anatoly Karpov, born in 1951, has in a few short years climbed to the top of the chess ladder. In 1974 he reached the semi-finals, the last step before the match with Fischer. Upon Fischer's refusal to play the FIDE declared Karpov world champion on April 1, 1975.

Boris Spassky has penned the following interesting picture of Karpov, who incidentally beat him out in the qualifying matches in 1974:

> I became acquainted with Anatoly Karpov at the end of 1965, during the teacher-training symposium of the junior team of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic held in the city of Vladimir, 180 kilometers from Moscow. Karpov was accompanied by my second, Grandmaster Igor Zakharovich Bondarevsky. I was his assistant. The two-week symposium provided special programs in tactics, solutions of problems and studies, and practical exercises. At its end, Grandmaster Bondarevsky and I gave a tandem simultaneous exhibition. Our game with Karpov ended in a draw. Karpov was then 14 years old, the youngest in a group of eight. However, through perceptivity and speed of reaction he took one of the first places, and his great chess talent was unquestionable. It is interesting to note that an unchildlike seriousness in the playing and conduct of the game was already then evident—I would venture to say an old man's seriousness.
>
> In the following years Karpov developed his talent more and more. One could always observe soundness and practicality in his games, a solid, somewhat passive style, a slow, difficult method of play based on sound, rational evaluation of the position. So it was up until 1972, at which time Karpov made a powerful, qualitative leap for-

ward. A greater aggressiveness appeared in his game. He began to take chances more willingly and more daringly. In a positional game there was a great solidity and clarity of thought, but in addition, he became a significantly more sharp-sighted tactical player. If one considers as well the high technique of the young grandmaster, then the sum total of all these qualities turned him into a powerful tournament fighter, a super-class grandmaster with beautiful prospects for the future. I will add that the young grandmaster has a well thought-out opening repertoire.

Karpov's first appearance in the West was at the Fried Chicken Tournament in San Antonio, Texas, in 1972, where he finished in a triple tie for first. An interview he gave at that time showed him to be very sparing of words, in marked contrast to Bobby Fischer. Here are some of the highlights of the interview:

Q: What great players have influenced you?

Karpov: I studied Capablanca's games. It was my first chess book.

Q: What is your style?

K: Style? I have no style.

Q: What is the "Soviet school of chess"? How can Tal and Smyslov come from the same "school"?

K: It is a theory of chess, a way of preparing. Style is not the point.

Q: There is a lot of propaganda about you as a challenger to Fischer. Does that bother you?

K: I don't think about it. I hope to play Fischer in three or four years.

Q: What did you think of the Fischer-Spassky match?

K: Few good games.

Q: What is chess to you?

K: It's everything—art, science, and sport.

Q: What are your other interests?

K: I collect stamps; I like theater, sports, light classical music.

Q: What are your impressions of the U.S.?

K: I like it, in general. I can't be specific. Public attendance at the tournament is small.

(15 yrs ago)

In spite of the fact that he won the title without playing Fischer, Karpov has already shown himself to be a worthy titleholder. He is a finished player, equally expert in all phases of the game. His meteoric rise from 1970 to 1975 is typical of many of the champions of the past. It is of course too early to say how long he will stay at the top. At the moment nobody except Fischer looks like a serious rival, and the American just refuses to play. But as we have seen, after every new champion some unknown appears on the scene within a few years to become the most formidable threat. Who that will be nobody can predict at present.

The methodical accumulation of advantages led to a solid victory over Gligoric in the Fried Chicken tournament. The notes include some of Karpov's comments.

KARPOV GLIGORIC

San Antonio, 1972

Ruy Lopez

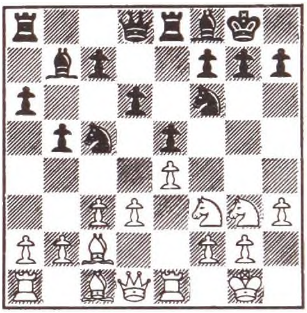
1 P–K4 P–K4
2 N–KB3 N–QB3
3 B–N5 P–QR3
4 B–R4 N–B3
5 O–O B–K2
6 R–K1 P–QN4
7 B–N3 P–Q3
8 P–B3 O–O
9 P–KR3 N–N1
10 P–Q3

Less usual than P–Q4. Karpov comments that "White defers the start of active play for a while."

10 . . . QN–Q2
11 QN–Q2 B–N2
12 N–B1

Actually an old variation, rather common in Steinitz's day. It is characteristic of contemporary chess that little effort is made in the opening to secure an advantage with White.

12 . . . N–B4
13 B–B2 R–K1
14 N–N3 B–KB1



Prevents P–Q4. Both sides are now sparring for an opening in the center.

15 P–N4 N(B4)–Q2
16 P–Q4

Finally!

16 . . . P–R3
17 B–Q2

Still sparring for a chance. The move protects the QNP in the event of a break in the center by Black.

17 . . . N–N3

Here Karpov comments: "For some reason, Gligoric declines to play the known 17 . . . P–QR4 which gives Black a completely equal game. Nevertheless, his move merits consideration."

18 B–Q3 R–B1

Hoping for eventual play on the QB-file.

19 Q–B2

Surprisingly Karpov gives this move an ! and a ?.

19 . . . Q–Q2

Karpov calls this a "lethargic" move. On 19 . . . P–B4 there would follow 20 NPxP QPxP 21 P–Q5, with advantage for White.

20 QR–Q1 Q–B3
21 B–K3 N–R5

Gligoric is already faced with a positional threat of N–Q2–N3–R5, so he looks for countermeasures.

22 R–QB1 N–N3
23 Q–N1

Karpov recommends the immediate N–Q2 as better. If then 23 . . . P–Q4 24 QPxP RxP 25 B–Q4 PxP 26 N(Q2)xP with advantage.

23 . . . Q–Q2
24 N–Q2 P–B4
25 NPxP QPxP
26 P–Q5 N–R5
27 P–QB4 P–N5
28 R–B1

Now White has a distinct plus, since his K-side attack will unfold, whereas Black's Q-side play is harmless.

28 . . . Q–B2
29 P–B4 N–Q2

He must try to hold the strong point at K4. If 29 . . . PxP 30 BxKBP B–Q3 31 BxB QxB 32 N–B5 is devastating.

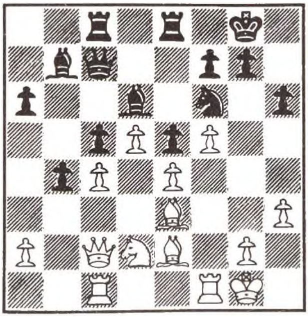
30 Q–B2 N–B6?

Loses a pawn to get some fresh air. Karpov says that the retreat to N3 would be "even gloomier" but gives no variations to prove it.

31 P–B5! N–B3
32 N–K2!?

Playing for the attack. However, as Karpov points out, winning the pawn with N–B3 and B–Q2 was simpler.

32 . . . NxNch
33 BxN B–Q3



34 P–N4 K–B1!

An ingenious defense: Black will run away from the pawn storm.

35 P–KR4 **K–K2**
36 P–N5 **PxP**
37 PxP **N–Q2**
38 B–N4

Regrouping; the immediate threat is P–B6ch.

38 . . . **R–KN1**

Better 38 . . . P–B3, as Karpov observes.

39 K–B2 **R–KR1**
40 R–KR1 **QR–KN1**
41 Q–Q1

Karpov criticizes this as a "not completely successful move," recommending instead 41 P–R3 P–R4 42 Q–R4! N–N3 43 Q–N5 with a decisive initiative.

41 . . . **K–Q1**

The sealed move. White was threatening P–B6 and Q–B3.

42 Q–N1 **N–N3**
43 R–R2

Preparing to double on the Rook file.

43 . . . **Q–K2**

To prevent the occupation of the R-file. Karpov calls it a serious mistake but does not indicate how after his recommendation of 43 . . . P–R4 44 Q–R1 Black can defend himself.

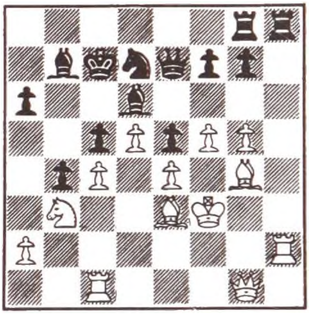
44 N–N3

With the penetration of this N to R5 the game is virtually decided.

44 . . . **K–B2**
45 K–B3!

Frees the Rook for maneuvering on the second rank.

45 . . . **N–Q2**



46 P–R3! **PxP**
47 R–R2 **R–R5**

A demonstration which gets him nowhere.

48 RxP **R(N1)–KR1**
49 R–QN1

Now the final action comes on the Q-side; Black is defenseless.

49 . . . **R–QN1**
50 Q–K1 **RxB**

Desperation. On 50 . . . R(R5)–R1 White wins with 51 Q–R5ch K–B1 52 P–B6! PxP 53 NxP.

51 KxR **B–B1**
52 Q–R5ch **Resigns**

On 52 . . . N–N3 there would follow 53 NxP, and on 52 . . . R–N3 53 NxP BxN 54 RxR BxR 55 BxBch NxB 56 P–B5.

A great battle!

Karpov has a profound knowledge of the modern openings. In the following game he seizes on his opponent's weak variation to score a solid victory.

KARPOV **URGUREANU**

Skopje, 1972
Sicilian Defense

1 P–K4 P–QB4
2 N–KB3 N–QB3
3 P–Q4 PxP
4 NxP N–B3
5 N–QB3 P–Q3
6 B–KN5 P–K3
7 Q–Q2

White has many ways of proceeding. The sharpest is 7 P–B4. It is typical of Karpov that he chooses a rather conservative line, yet one full of pitfalls.

7 . . . B–K2
8 O–O–O O–O

Challenging him to try 9 NxN? PxN *10* BxN BxB *11* QxP Q–R4, when Black has ample compensation for his pawn.

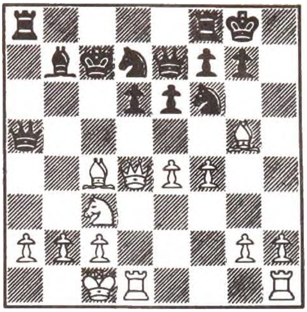
9 P–B4

Threatening to disrupt Black's position with NxN and P–K5.

9 . . . NxN
10 QxN Q–R4

An active defense; if *11* P–K5 PxP *12* PxP? R–Q1 is too strong.

11 B–B4! B–Q2



Gives Karpov the opportunity he is looking for, but the defense is already in difficulties.

12 P–K5 PxP
13 PxP B–B3

Unattractive and unavoidable: if instead *13* . . . KR–Q1 *14* Q–B4 N–R4 *15* Q–R4 BxBch *16* QxB P–N3 *17* P–KN4 with a clear advantage, or *13* . . . N–Q4 *14* BxB, winning a piece.

14 B–Q2!

The point: White wins the two Bishops.

14 . . . N–Q2
15 N–Q5 Q–Q1
16 NxBch QxN
17 KR–K1

White now dominates the board; if *17* . . . BxP? *18* R–N1 B–B6 *19* B–KR6 wins.

The variation is identical with the game Kavalek–Benko, Netanya 1969. There Benko tried *17* . . . Q–B4 and lost after *18* Q–B4 B–N4 *19* B–N3!.

17 . . . **KR–B1**
18 **Q–B4** **P–QR4**
19 **K–N1**

No hurry.

19 . . . **N–N3**
20 **B–Q3** **N–Q4**
21 **Q–KN4** **Q–B4**
22 **R–K4!** **P–QN4**

To prevent R–B4.

23 **Q–R3!**

With veiled threats against the Black King position.

23 . . . **N–N5**

Desperation, but on 23 . . . P–R3 24 BxP is decisive.

24 **B–K3!**

As usual, Karpov chooses the clearest win; in this respect he resembles both Capablanca and Fischer. On 24 RxN PxR 25 QxPch K–B1 26 Q–R8ch K–K2 27 QxP White would undoubtedly win too, but Black has possible counterplay, which is absent from the game.

24 . . . **BxR**

On Q moves he either loses the Queen or is mated; e.g., 24 . . . Q–Q4 25 RxN PxR 26 BxPch, or 24 . . . Q–K2 25 RxN PxR 26 QxPch and mate next.

25 **BxB!**

Again the clearest.

25 . . . **QxP**
26 **QxPch** **K–B1**
27 **BxR** **K–K2**

On 27 . . . QxB 28 Q–R8ch wins the other Rook.

28 **Q–K4**

Secure in his extra piece.

28 . . . **Q–B2**
29 **Q–N7!** **Resigns**

Hail the Unknown

Full many a chess master is born to blush unseen. Occasionally we come across games which bear the unmistakable stamp of real creative genius, and yet the player has never been heard of. In honor of all the unsung heroes of the chessboard we present one such game.

ADAMS TORRE

New Orleans, 1925
Philidor's Defense

1 **P–K4** **P–K4**
2 **N–KB3** **P–Q3**
3 **P–Q4** **PxP**

Inferior to 3 . . . N–KB3.

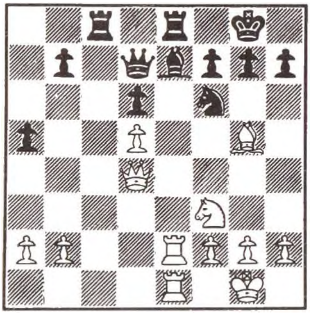
4 **QxP** **N–QB3**
5 **B–QN5** **B–Q2**
6 **BxN** **BxB**
7 **N–B3**

By transposition a variation of the Ruy Lopez favorable for White has been reached.

7 . . . N-B3
8 O-O B-K2
9 N-Q5 BxN
10 PxB O-O
11 B-N5 P-B3?

Better *11* . . . N-Q2.

12 P-B4 PxP
13 PxP R-K1
14 KR-K1 P-QR4
15 R-K2 R-QB1
16 QR-K1 Q-Q2



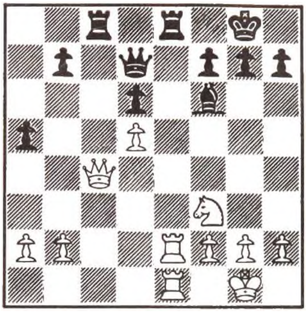
Black seems to be working his way out of his difficulties, but White rises to the occasion.

17 BxN! BxB
18 Q-KN4!!

With threats of mate or loss of the Queen.

18 . . . Q-N4
19 Q-QB4!!! Q-Q2

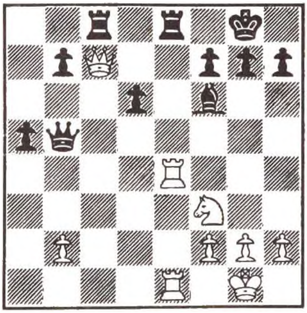
Again the Queen cannot be taken because of mate.



20 Q-B7!!! Q-N4

And still the Queen cannot be taken.

21 P-QR4!! QxRP
22 R-K4!!! Q-N4



23 QxNP!!! Resigns

A combination unique in the annals of chess.

Retrospect and Prospect

Chess has been in existence for almost two thousand years; yet as an art it began only a little over a hundred years ago. In that period several thousand masters have made their appearance, played their games, and gone their way. Of these several thousand only a handful have achieved immortality. Why? Always this questions arises—what makes a great chess master?

If we look over the masters described in this book, several striking facts emerge. First of all, the chess master may come from any country and any stock. Pillsbury came from middleclass Boston, Torre from a poor Mexican family, Sultan Khan from an Indian plantation. Chess supremacy on the whole has shifted from one country to another. First the greatest masters were found in Italy. Successively it became Spain, France, England, Germany, the U.S.A., and the U.S.S.R. It seems to parallel the rise of these countries as world powers. Yet where the individual genius will come from is totally unpredictable. The Cuban Capablanca, the Dutchman Euwe, the Estonian Keres, to mention only a few, all came from environments which never before and never since have produced a master of even remotely comparable strength. Although the chess strength of the U.S.S.R. as a whole is today greater than that of any other nation, where the next geniuses will come from is still anybody's guess. It is in fact surprising that Soviet Russia has produced so few native grandmasters who are near the stature of a Botvinnik, and that an American genius has surpassed all the Russians

The chess master begins young. As we turn the pages, we find increasing youth the rule. In the nineteenth century many of the great names were unknown before their thirties; today every prominent grandmaster alive has scored some notable success in his late teens, or at the most early twenties. One could almost safely say that if a chess player has not reached the national championship class before he is twenty-one he will never become world champion and probably will never even become a grandmaster.

Genius for chess seems to be specific. Some of the great masters, like Staunton and Vidmar, have been eminent in other fields; they are the exception, not the rule. What this genius consists of we do not as yet know. That need hardly dismay us, for we know little about genius in general.

Several characteristic differences stand out, however, between the world champions and most of their challengers. World champions last longer. At his best Rubinstein was probably as good—if not better—than Lasker, but his best lasted only about five years. And why do world champions last longer? This question we can answer. They maintain themselves because they continue to grow with the growth of chess, and because they are many-sided, not one-sided. Lasker at sixty-five could master the intricacies of post-hypermodern chess sufficiently to finish third in a tournament as strong as Moscow 1935. On the contrary, a lesser master like Bogolyubov could not grasp the new ideas which came up when he was in his forties and was bowled over by the rising generation. If we compare Lasker and Blackburne, or Capablanca and Marshall, we cannot say that the world champions had more innate ability. Blackburne's genius was extraordinary; perhaps, if such things can be measured, superior to Lasker's. But he was one-sided. He had one approach to the game—to attack, to sacrifice, to be brilliant. The positional subtleties of a Steinitz were beyond him, and once he could not attack he could not adapt himself to the situation. The world champion has always been—and must be —a past master of every phase of the game. Bobby has proved that over and over. And Karpov has underscored it.

And finally, world champions take years to develop. As chess becomes more complex, it will no doubt take longer. But even as we know it today, the champion must be at the game from five to ten years before he has reached his true height. My own experience, I think, is typical: five years after I had learned the moves I was a master; it took me another five years to reach the grandmaster class.

Putting it all together, we can predict what the world champion of the future will be like. He may come from any country in the civilized world. He will be young; before he is twenty-one he will have done something of major importance, though the age at which he wins the title depends on historical accidents. It will take him at least ten years after he learns the moves to reach the world championship class. And he will be a many-sided genius, fully at home in every branch of the game.

The above paragraph was written in 1950; a few years later Fischer came along. Then Fischer resigned to Karpov, who also fits the description. Who will the next one be?

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